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Inter-Arab Affairs

King Hassan Meets Maghreb Union Ministers

LD2307174791 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] King Hassan II, may God make him victorious, has received the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] foreign ministers who are taking part in the proceedings of the ninth session of the AMU Ministerial Council held this afternoon at the royal palace of Skhirat in Rabat. The ministers are: Abdellatif Filali, minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation; Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari, secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Jamahiriya; Lakhdar Ibrahimi, Algerian minister of foreign affairs; Habib Benyahiya, Tunisian minister of foreign affairs and Hasni Ould Didi, Mauritanian minister of foreign affairs and cooperation. This audience was attended by Minister of State Moulay Ahmed Alaoui; His Majesty's Adviser Mr. Ahmed Reda Guedia; and Minister of the Interior and Information Mr. Driss Basri

AMU Conference Ends

LD2407030191 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Proceedings of the ninth session of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] foreign ministers council concluded this afternoon in Rabat. The agenda of this two-day session included ratifying the minutes of the former session, studying a report concerning the development achieved in the march for the edification of the union, and relations with regional groupings and international organizations.

Regarding the proceedings of this session, Mr. Abdellatif Filali, minister of state in charge of foreign affairs and cooperation, stressed in a statement to MAP that the proceedings provided an occasion for the council to review the results of the achievements carried out during two and a half years in the life of the union. This review will make adopting a new action strategy possible. He added that the council asked the follow-up committee to (?prepare) these results, submit proposals about the future of the union, and draft a report for the next meeting.

He also reviewed all the issues examined during this meeting which concern AMU relations with the EC and its relations within the framework of the Four plus Five group, as well as its relations with Arab, African, and Latin American countries. Mr. Abdellatif Filali recalled the council's support for the Agha Khan's report on easing the economic embargo on Iraq and expressed hope that the United Nations will respond positively to the call included in the report. The foreign ministers of Algeria, Tunisia, and Mauritania left Morocco this afternoon. [passage omitted]

Lebanese-Syrian Talks on Peace Process Set

NC2407055991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The issue of Lebanon's participation in the international Middle East peace conference and Damascus's position on this conference will be the first topic on the agenda of an expanded summit meeting to be held in Damascus tomorrow. The meeting will be attended on the Lebanese side by President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, and on the Syrian side by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi.

The summit will focus on coordination between the countries and the position they will take at the conference. They will also assess the outcome of U.S. efforts in light of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's tour of the area. The two sides will also review the security measures which have been implemented by the Lebanese legitimacy, including the Lebanese Army's deployment in the south—in the Sidon and Tyre districts.

Palestinian Affairs

Baker Remarks on Peace Talks Delegation Noted

NC2307133691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Tunis, 23 Jul (MENA)—Palestinian sources have told the MENA correspondent in Tunis that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker proposed to the Palestinian figures with whom he met during his recent Middle East tour that Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi be excluded from the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that will participate in the peace conference. He said that this exclusion would facilitate the initial stages of the negotiations process.

The sources added that Baker also proposed that a Jerusalem-born Palestinian currently in the diaspora be included in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The sources pointed out that Baker affirmed, however, that the selection of the Palestinian delegation is a matter that concerns the Palestinians alone.

Palestinian Representation Viewed

LD2307201991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Member Brother Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh said in Damascus yesterday that there could be no peace conference without a Palestinian representation and according to the PLO definition. He said that we totally oppose the calls for normalization and the end of the Arab economic boycott against Israel.

Brother 'Abd Rabbuh believes that a full and balanced Palestinian representation is the guarantee for the protection of Palestinian rights. He also believes that without clear and official acknowledgement that the basis of the conference will be the full Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestinian land, including Jerusalem, and the right of Palestinian self-determination, there is no need for this conference.

Brother 'Abd Rabbuh indicated that we have not said our last word, because we have not been officially informed by the sides in charge of the current political operation, especially Washington and the Soviet Union, regarding any details or definite ideas.

Jordanian-Palestinian Group Acceptable

LD2307202191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Brother Faysal al-Husayni has stressed that Baker told the Palestinian delegation that choosing the Palestinian delegation to participate in the probable peace negotiations is a matter that concerns the Palestinians alone.

During a news conference yesterday, al-Husayni, who was accompanied by Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi and Dr. Zakariya al-Agha, indicated that the Americans told us in all frankness that they consider eastern Jerusalem as part of the occupied land, and as far as we are concerned, there is no room for the exclusion of the residents of the city from our delegation.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi stated that Baker informed us that any negotiations that take place with Arab countries alone, without the participation of the Palestinians, are doomed to fail.

Al-Husayni also stated that Palestinians in the occupied land prefer an independent Palestinian delegation, but they will not object to a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. He indicated that the Palestinians wish that the UN representative to the conference has full rights.

Meeting To Decide on Representation

JN2407053591 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0430 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] An informed Palestinian source said in Damascus that a meeting attended by Syria, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Liberation Organization would decide on the Palestinian representation for the peace negotiations in case Israel's response to the U.S. peace proposals is positive. The source added that the meeting would also restress that the Arabs are committed to the Palestinians' rights. The source also said that the position will be drawn up during the PLO's team talks in Syria.

Joint Delegation Discussed

JN2407095091 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Jul 91 pp 1, 24

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Talking about the formation of a joint delegation to the proposed peace conference on the heels of Baker's fifth tour is no longer premature, as Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur pointed out sometime last week. Signs of the conference have begun to appear on the horizon, and announcing the formation of a joint delegation is now imminent. Add to this that the Jordanian and Palestinian sides have never differed over the formation of a joint delegation as a formula to attend the conference. Furthermore, quiet diplomacy of the two sides has succeeded in eliminating any notion about the joint delegation being a Jordanian-Palestinian dispute so that this issue would not be focused on and in order to block the way before Israel's rejection of any formula for just peace.

President 'Arafat emphasized this when he said that forming the joint delegation is a domestic Arab affair that would be agreed upon among Arab parties. In the past, neither Jordan nor the PLO aborted the idea of the joint delegation, and the direct cause of this was not a dispute between His Majesty King Husayn and President 'Arafat, but the United States and Israel were the ones which aborted the idea.

The Jordanian side is now awaiting a clear, unequivocal PLO announcement that it does not object to forming a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation as a formula to attend the international conference .

This matter will be decided on during the high-level Palestinian leadership's meetings which begin today in Tunis. The mission will not be easy for the Palestinian president who will try his best to facilitate the peace mission and to protect the PLO structure from dispute and disintegration.

The mission is not easy because some Palestinian factions reject the idea of the joint delegation. Yesterday 'Umar Qutaysh, spokesman of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], rejected the formula of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, considering this as cancellation of Palestinian national rights. The Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP] also took a stand in harmony with the PFLP and criticized Faysal al-Husayni and his colleagues after their meeting with Baker, who strongly expressed the U.S. desire for a joint delegation. The Front warned against canceling the PLO role and of the possibility of representing the Palestinian people through a joint Palestinian- Jordanian delegation.

The mission of the Palestinian president, who will chair the Tunis meetings, is not easy because in line with Palestinian democracy he must convince the representatives of the various factions entering a peace conference through the joint delegation formula does not necessarily mean canceling the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative, given the unambiguous Jordanian policy; of the decision made by the Palestine National Council on confederation with Jordan; of Jordan's historic disengagement decision, which appears irreversible; and of

the fact that there is no need to have recourse to old agreements. Add to this the clear, unanimous Palestinian initiative in 1988 that opened the door to the possibility of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict peacefully and declared that the PLO would not be an obstacle to the course of just peace if Israel were serious about establishing peace, and if Washington had the political will, under the new global order, to hold an international conference on the basis of the principles declared by Bush in his speech to Congress. This is especially significant since the speech won Arab and Palestinian approval, was understood as a recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and contained positive elements that were primarily linked to the initiative launched by president 'Arafat in 1988.

Moreover, until now there has been no abandonment of Palestinian constants. For democracy and Jerusalem, in the Palestinian president's view, are two basic issues that are subject neither to negotiation nor abandonment, whatever the degree of Palestinian flexibility. Therefore, responding to the U.S. request through a joint delegation would not mean canceling or sidestepping the PLO, because Washington knows that there would be no peace without the PLO's participation and endorsement. The Jordanian position, on the other hand, is clear and frank, and Jordanian diplomacy has been clear and realistic. It emphasizes Palestinian constants and the PLO's role in any peace process as a major party to the Palestinian and Arab-Israeli dispute.

'Arafat Interviewed on Current Peace Efforts

JN2407071691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0614 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Widad 'Alam-al-Din; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Alam-al-Din] Good evening, Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat].

['Arafat] Good evening, you are welcome.

['Alam-al-Din] Abu-'Ammar, in light of the Israeli approval of Bush's plan and also in light of some Arab countries' approval of it, what is the PLO's position?

['Arafat] Before you ask this question, you should know that the U.S. Administration is not dealing with the PLO. Accordingly, the PLO is not responsible nor forced to deal with ghosts. We have no ghosts in the Palestinian arena. Accordingly, we are waiting to see the dimensions of this Israeli-American plan which completely ignores the issue of Jerusalem, scraps all the national and political rights of the Palestinian people, and seeks to work on two tracks.

The first track is that of normalizing Arab-Israeli relations—regrettably this has already started through this rapid concession made vis-a-vis ending the boycott. In the meantime there are many things which the Israelis will demand. Concerning the other track, which is the Palestinian track, the American-Israeli plan talks about the Palestinian-Israeli situation whose ceiling is autonomy. It is not really autonomy but self-administration for three years following two years of negotiations. This totals five years, during which they will have swallowed up the land. Already they have swallowed 65 percent of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and are bringing new immigrants through civis regular Jewish immigration. They are expecting to have 3 million Israelis or 3 million Jews as citizens in Israel in 1995, and this is the catastrophe.

In view of all these facts, we wonder if the Arab nation has surrendered to the Israeli conditions. I really want to read to you what the American consul exactly told our brothers in Jerusalem. He told them: I emphasize to you that what Mr. Baker said in Damascus was not directed only to the defeated Palestinians but to all the Arab countries—I would like to ask a question: Who said we are defeated? This is the Israeli way of thinking, the American way of thinking, because their strategic depth has been destroyed and they should accept what is dictated by the triumphant side, that is Israel. America is trying to check this triumph in order to ensure the success of its policy in the region. Hence, Schwarzkopf's statement to the Israeli Army Radio was precise when he said: We have launched this war to serve and defend Israel.

['Alam-al-Din] Do you mean that this is what the U.S. consul said after meeting with the Palestinian delegation?

['Arafat] This was said on 15 July before the last meeting of the Palestinian delegation with Baker so it is very recent, almost less than a week ago.

['Alam-al-Din] What about the outcome of Baker's meeting with the Palestinian delegation?

['Arafat] More U.S. retreats, including the fact that the Palestinian delegation should not include representatives of the city of Jerusalem—not even those who are holding talks with them, like sister Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi and brother Faysal [al-Husayni]. These people are not allowed to be representatives according to the U.S.-Israeli view. Israeli officials think they have received definite guarantees from Secretary Baker that the United States will oppose the presence of a member from East Jerusalem with the delegation.

['Alam-al-Din] Has the authorized....

['Arafat, interrupting] The most dangerous thing is that the team that remained in Israel after Baker's departure includes Dennis Ross, who is not only a Zionist but supports the Likud more than the Likud members themselves. Also there is John Kelly and other assistants. This delegation is negotiating with a joint ministerial committee to hold an in-depth discussion about the joint Jordanian- Palestinian delegation. Does this mean that they themselves will form the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation? They even denied Jordan this

privilege. Are they going to form the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation together? This means that there is a veto on all Arab delegations, not only the Palestinian delegation. I am not making anything up. This news is certain. You can read it in THE JERUSALEM POST.

['Alam-al-Din] Other than this, what was the outcome of the talks? Did the Palestinian delegation provide any more details?

['Arafat] We are waiting for news from the Palestinian delegation. We are waiting for a letter of understanding. We want to know are the negotiations merely over the duration of the talks, since President Bush wants one session only, supported by Shamir in this regard, who wants a one-time festival so that they can benefit from their Arab friends. They would say that we are really trying to resolve the Palestine question, and we are not dealing with double standards but we are eager about international legitimacy. It is their international legitimacy, however, not the UN legitimacy. The meeting would then end, and they would start discussing the major topic; that is, normalizing Arab-Israeli relations.

['Alam-al-Din] In this regard, what do you think of President Mubarak's suggestion to lift the Arab economic embargo on Israel in return for stopping building settlements in the occupied territories?

['Arafat] I will only refer him and Baker to the Israeli Government's decision, following Baker's departure from Israel, to set up four new settlements. Let me tell you this: They do not need new settlements; let us not be deceived. The settlements that have currently been set up in Jerusalem, for instance, are enough to absorb a million people as Sharon said. As for other settlements in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza, they could also absorb another million without establishing new settlements. I think this is enough for the time being so let no one be deceived. If, however, some people are deceived by what they hear, we are not among them. We know the score. I am not wet behind the ears, and a novice will not fool me.

['Alam-al-Din] Is there coordination between the PLO and the Arab states that are concerned with the future or expected negotiations?

['Arafat] In fact, we have called frankly and clearly for a meeting of the frontline states so that we will not be devoured separately by this U.S.-Israeli scheme. The U.S. Administration has adopted the Israeli no's. I want to tell you that when President Mitterrand stood in Martinique at the news conference and spoke about four important points: the international conference, the Palestinians' right to self-determination, the establishment of a Palestinian state for the Palestinian people, and the PLO's participation in all peace steps, President Bush replied to him with four no's, no, no, no, no. These are the Israeli no's. Let us speak frankly. We are not confronting the U.S. no's but Israeli no's that are approved and backed by U.S. no's, U.S. pressure, and U.S. influence, especially since the United States now considers itself the new Rome. Do you understand? They should remember, however, that Spartacus was a Palestinian, and Christ and his disciples were Palestinians.

['Alam-al-Din] What are the new prospects now?

['Arafat] Sister Widad, I want to tell you something. Not all of those colonialism plans are our fate. In 1982, they said that the Palestinian revolution was finished and the PLO was finished, but the Phoenix rose again in 1983. In 1987, this was said again, but the intifadah came to strengthen the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people will pursue their struggle and revolution. We know that the battle is a difficult one. There is a proverb in our country: The son of the wolf tells his father: Every time we walk along a road in a village the people attack and chase us with sticks and rifles. He told him: My son, are we small? We are not small. And I say that we are not small either. Therefore I tell my people in the occupied territories that each time the night becomes darker, dawn becomes closer. I know that this is a difficult time, but blessed be those who make history with letters of fire and light. Blessed be every woman, child, and man in Palestine, the land of peace, the holy land, while making this new history. We promise them to pray together in the first of the two kiblahs and the third holiest mosque, the point of departure for Prophet Muhammad's midnight journey to the seven heavens, and in the cradle of Christ, may God's peace be upon him. They see the day indeed as a far-off event, but we see it quite near. For we are true. [Koranic verses]

['Alam-al-Din] Thank you very much.

PLO's Bal'awi Reviews Peace Process, Talks

JN2407102491 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Jul 91 pp 18, 14

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Al-Hakam Bal'awi, Palestinian ambassador in Tunis and member of the Fatah Central Committee, has stressed that the PLO will not obstruct the peace process.

In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, Bal'awi said that it is Shamir and the Israeli Government that have failed to respond and are still intransigent and rejecting all peace initiatives.

Bal'awi, who is also a member of the Palestinian delegation visiting Jordan, refused to give information about forming the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. He said: It cannot be discussed in the media or detailed in newspapers. He also stressed that it was necessary to discuss the formula of the joint delegation with Jordanian officials, with those who are directly involved in attending the peace conference, and—first of all—with the Palestinian leadership, taking into account that ever since the Palestinian peace initiative was proposed, the PLO has been calling for comprehensive peace. This was included in the peace initiative and in President 'Arafat's statements and contacts in order to confirm that the

PLO will not obstruct the peace process; instead Shamir's government's intransigence and its rejection of all initiatives are obstructing the peace process.

Regarding the meeting between the Palestinian delegation led by Mahmud 'Abbas, Abu-Mazin, and the prime minister and his deputy, Foreign Minister al-Hakam Bal'awi said: We held a lengthy meeting during which we discussed the latest developments and the results of Secretary Baker's visit to the region. We are continuing to meet to cover all issues related to the peace process, after which an appropriate decision will be made. This means that we will hold a series of meetings and contacts in the near future.

Answering SAWT AL-SHA'B's question of why some factions rejected Baker's meeting with the Palestinian delegation inside [the occupied territories], the official said: It has all been media speculation. The Palestinian leaders will study all the developments and results of the contacts to be able to announce the right position at the appropriate time.

On the Palestinian delegation's visit to Cairo and its talks there, Bal'awi said: Before leaving for Jordan, we met with brother Egyptian officials 'Amr Musa, minister of foreign affairs, and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary at the Foreign Ministry and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs. They briefed us on the results of Baker's visit to Egypt. We also acquainted the Egyptian brothers with the PLO's ideas and the outcome of its deliberations on Secretary Baker's visit. All this was meant to get a complete picture of these political moves. The Palestinian leaders will discuss all this in the near future.

Concerning the PLO's position on the peace process, al-Hakam Bal'awi said: From the time President Bush set forth his principles to the Congress, the PLO has welcomed the positive elements in his speech regarding Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338, which prohibit the acquisition of land by force, and the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights. We interpret the latter as being the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, which eventually will lead to confederation with Jordan. The fact that the PLO welcomes these positive elements essentially stems from the Palestinian political initiative president 'Arafat launched in 1988, which gained the support of the overwhelming majority of the people of the world. The achievement of peace hinges on the political will and the true intentions of the U.S. Administration in keeping with its voiced respect for international legitimacy and the need for its implementation.

Halting Settlements, Arab Boycott Link Rejected

JN2307180091 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Jul 91

["Statement" issued by the Palestinian National Salvation Front, PNSF, during its 22 July meeting; place not given]

[Text] During its 22 July 1991 meeting, the PNSF leadership discussed Arab and international political developments and moves by international and Arab parties under the slogan of achieving peace in the region and settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. In light of this, the PNSF declares and affirms the following:

The PNSF stresses the Palestinian people's right to repatriation, self-determination, the establishment of their independent state, and the unity of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories through the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Any attempt to obliterate or encroach on these rights will be considered an aggression on the people and a conspiracy against their rights, and the Palestinian people will firmly reject this.

Any settlement that cannot achieve the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights or guarantee their rights to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of the Palestinian state on their soil will not bind the Palestinian people, does not express their will, and has nothing to do with them.

The building of settlements, which have come as a result of an organized, intensive immigration, is an act of aggression and a continuation of aggression against the Palestinian people, their firm rights, and the Palestinian and Arab lands, and is also a violation of the principles of international law and human rights. Any attempt to link halting the settlement process with the Arab boycott of the Zionist entity—which is an act of sovereignty—is a concession that should not be made to the enemy, which practices aggression, occupies the Arab land, and continues to deny the firm Palestinian and Arab rights.

The ongoing Israeli occupation of Arab land and the escalation of Zionist settlements are a continuation of the Zionist aggression being imposed on the Arab nation and its future and fate, and an insult to international law and the UN resolutions. Normalization of relations with the Zionist entity, which was founded on aggression and which continues to confiscate land, escalate immigration, and expand settlements, would be a relinquishment of national sovereignty, a concession to the enemy, and a surrender to Israel's expansionism and aggression at the expense of the Arab nation's national and historic rights, which have been recognized by international norms, human rights, and the UN Charter.

[Signed] 22 July 1991, the Palestinian National Salvation Front.

Commentary Views U.S. 'Conspiracy of Treason'

LD2307202791 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] The U.S. Administration is still pursuing a contradictory policy, which is clearly evident in its dealing with the Arabs and with their central cause, the Palestinian cause.

The first concern of the U.S. Administration, as expressed in the statements of Mr. Baker in Jerusalem, is to create an operation which is acceptable to Israel. As for the Palestinian people and as for their national and political rights, foremost of which is the removal of the occupation from its land, namely Jerusalem, this is an issue which is not mentioned nor dealt with by Mr. Baker, as if the Palestinian people are the aggressor as well as the occupier, and not the Zionist entity.

The tour of the U.S. secretary of state goes on. At each stop, surprises continue to emerge; the U.S. proposals keep retreating until they come closer to the Israeli conditions or until these proposals and the Israeli position stand side by side on the same line and on the same spot, and do not stop at the deliberate linkage between halting the settlements in return for ending the boycott.

This issue raises a matter which is one of the most significant issues for Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and Christians as a whole. It is the issue of Jerusalem and the exclusion of its representatives from the negotiations. To exclude it actually means denying it the right to be the first issue for discussion at the table of any peace conference and consequently its exclusion would mean denying that it is an issue at all. [passage omitted]

All Arabs and Muslims should be fully aware of the forthcoming danger which is expressed by the U.S. secretary of state, who is using all U.S. pressure to exclude any citizen from Jerusalem from participating in any peace conference in response to the Israeli conditions. The question here is not related to the form but to the subject matter. It is related to the fundamental conflict: between the Israeli leaders' view of Jerusalem as a Jewish and Zionist city and Israel's eternal capital, and our view—ours as Palestinians—that Jerusalem is a symbol of revealed religions, a capital of the Palestinian state, and a destination for the focus of attention and pilgrims from all corners of the earth. The issue is related to sanctities that go beyond the Palestinians and represent sanctities for all Muslims and Christians; no king or president can afford to relinquish or neglect them.

The matter here is a big conspiracy of treason that is being implemented by the U.S. Administration. It starts with the step of excluding Jerusalem Palestinians from any conference or negotiations, thus paving the way for considering the step as a relinquishment and a recognition that Jerusalem is Jewish. Consequently this means relinquishing Islamic and Christian sanctities.

While we reject this maneuver and the worst form of U.S. pressure in the history of the U.S. Administration, we would like to put this matter to Islamic public opinion, with Arab kings, presidents, and leaders at its forefront, and to international Christian public opinion especially to his holiness the pope and the Vatican. Muslim and Christian sanctities are in danger; the U.S. Administration is practicing its game aimed at destroying the Arab, Muslim, and Christian soul step by step.

'Arafat Receives 'Special Message' From France

JN2307172791 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and PLO Executive Committee chairman, received a special message from the French Government at his meeting with French Ambassador in Tunis Alain Grenier. Their talks dealt with the situation in the Middle East and France's share in the international efforts to achieve peace in the region.

PLO's Qaddumi Holds Talks With PNSF Leader

JN2307173491 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Abu-al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] and his delegation have visited Khalid al-Fahum, leader of the Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF], at his office in the headquarters of the Palestine National Council [PNC] in Damascus. They discussed the latest political developments. Abu-al-Lutf said afterwords that the meeting was part of the [words indistinct].

Abu-al-Lutf is expected to meet with leaders of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and the al-Sa'iqah organization. On these meetings, he said we are holding continuous contacts as we prepare for forming a new PNC to consolidate Palestinian national unity. The delegation continues its visit to Damascus.

PNC Speaker Not To Seek Reelection

JN2407065091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Jul 91 p 3

["Special" to the JORDAN TIMES by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Amman—The speaker of the Palestine National Council (PNC), Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, announced Tuesday that he does not wish to run for the post again in the coming PNC elections, expected to be held in September.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih told AL-RA'Y and the JORDAN TIMES that whether serving in a prominent post or in his capacity as an ordinary citizen he would be serving the Palestinian cause. New Palestinian blood will enter the PNC in the coming elections and the new elements will represent all Palestinian groups and sectors, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said.

He stressed that some of the Palestinian factions and popular groups and unions have already started naming their candidates for the coming PNC membership elections.

But, he said, the new PNC would not include more than 452 members who represent the Palestinain people in and outside the occupied Arab territories.

A special committee preparing for the PNC's coming meeting is due to meet in Tunis in the coming week to

pave the way for elections, which are going to be held in the Tunisian capital. The committee, he said, groups representatives of various Palestinian political factions.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih, who resides in Amman, said that the general conditions prevailing in the Palestinian lands and the pressures being exercised on the Palestinian people require the speeding up of the election process. He said that the coming PNC will have to deal with the question of crystallising the Palestinian people's national orientation since it serves as the Palestinian Parliament in exile.

Algeria

FIS Officials To Meet in Batna 25 Jul

LD2307104891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Excerpt] At the national level, days before the meeting with parties called for by the prime minister, it is not yet known whether the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] will be taking part, all the more since the FIS is still grappling with the problems of leadership and splits.

In an attempt to put the FIS house in order, a meeting will be held shortly with the participation of members of the consultative council, and chairman of regional executive bureaus. Our colleagues Halloub and Noura have contacted Mr. Hachemi Sahnouni, one of the FIS leaders, and held this short dialogue with him.

[Begin Sahnouni recording] This meeting will take place next Thursday [25 July], God willing, in Batna. This is the most prepared governorate, and the brothers asked and said: Do not always stay here in the capital. We are trying a bit to destroy this barrier. We said: We do not mind. [passage omitted] [end recording]

FLN Central Committee Issues Resolution

LD2307130491 Algiers APS in English 1038 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Algiers, 23/7/91 (APS)—Members of the Central Committee [CC] of the National Liberation Front Party (FLN) adopted, following three days of debates, a resolution of general policy.

After having exposed the general situation and the state of the nation and the party through the report of the general secretary the CC and listened to reports of organic and political commission constituted, during the last extraordinary session of the CC and following the general debate which follows, the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front declared that the existence of the FLN as a party and national movement transmitting the ideals of November, is subordinated to the people's will. [sentence as received]

The Central Committee registered the progressive return to calm and the consolidation of peace, which will contribute to gather the best conditions of the holding of the next legislative elections aiming at making the country go out the transitional situation.

Called to reject any form of violence to facilitate the establishment of dialogue between the competent authorities and the political formations, and place the high interest of the nation beyond any other consideration.

Concerning the democratic progress, it requires from the living forces of the nation, particularly in the prescnt conjuncture, concertation, dialogue and coordination. In this connection, the CC launched an appeal to all the people's organizations in order to thwart attempts of all those who foment conflicts between the national forces destined to weaken them.

The development of the pluralist and political parties practice requires the adaptation of the party action and organic structures.

The Central Committee reiterated its support to the government in its mission of preservation of security, preparation of legislative elections and economic measures to guarantee independence of the political decision and protection of the national resources. [It] insisted on the necessity to continue to protect the purchase power of the citizen and the stability of the means of production.

Malians on Trial for Attacks in South

LD2307134991 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] In the south of Algeria Malian citizens, who were trained in one of the neighboring countries, are entering Algerian territory illegally and are using weapons against Algerian citizens.

The Malians involved are being tried at Tamanrasset court. Tamanrasset court is today examining the case of Malians involved in infiltrating into Algeria and carrying automatic firearms, including Kalashnikovs, a large collection of handguns, and Molotov cocktails.

According to Jamie Boumaraf, our correspondent in Tamanrasset, these Malians carried out a series of violent actions, including firing at citizens. According to the public prosecution in Tamanrasset, it seems that these Malians come from northern Mali and are connected with the problem of Azawad. They wanted to chase some of the Tuareg refugees whom Algeria has allowed to take asylum in its territory.

The preliminary investigations of the accused revealed that they received weapons training in one of the neighboring countries. It is also necessary to point out a grave security precedent. One person was shot dead during the past two days. It is not improbable that the assassination was committed by the same armed group.

Egypt

Foreign Minister on Gulf Security, Peace Process

JN2007085891 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Jul 91 p 6

[Interview with Foreign Minster 'Amr Musa by Caroline Faraj in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [Faraj] The Egyptian president announced recently that the Egyptian forces will not participate in any likely aggression against Iraq. Does this mean a change in Egyptian policy toward Iraq?

[Musa] There is no change at all in Egyptian policy. The mission of the Egyptian forces was to confront the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, liberate Kuwait, and stand in the face of any attack against the sisterly Arab Gulf states. The Egyptian forces did not take part in any attack against Iraq. This is a consistent position. As the president said, Egypt will not participate in any blow dealt to Iraq under any circumstances.

And this does not mean that we agree with or approve the Iraqi leadership's present course. This is a principled stand related to our position toward Iraq as a sisterly country and the fraternal people of Iraq.

[Faraj] The Egyptian-Syrian-Gulf meeting was postponed more than once, and this was preceded by the withdrawal of Egyptian forces from the Gulf. Other forces with different qualifications and numbers were returned to the Gulf. What is the Egyptian-Gulf story?

[Musa] If you had asked what is the story of Egyptian-Gulf cooperation, I would have answered.

The meeting was really postponed twice, and the postponement was always for a few days. It was neither canceled nor postponed for an indefinite period. The date of the meeting was changed. What happened was not a postponement, but a change in the date. The meeting was scheduled for the beginning of July; and then it became 15 July instead of 9 July. Why?

The ministers had appointments. These days were not wasted, because Gulf security is a big issue, not a small issue where we can sit down and agree on everything and then it will be over. No, the issue is different, because it deals with confronting the future and its possibilities, and with Arab security, including Gulf security. This requires many studies, consultations, and contacts to reach agreement on the action and method to be followed. Many interpretations are included in this. There might be differences in opinions; however, all of these opinions aim at reaching the soundest and best situation regarding security. Life is very complicated, and politics is deeply intertwined and requires much effort and study. And whether we want it or not, a new era of inter-Arab relations emerged after what happened between Iraq and Kuwait. It is a different era. We cannot decide the fate or course of serious issues related to Arab security in a single session. The more time we take and the more efforts we make in terms of discussions, contacts, and consultations, the better the result will be. We in Egypt do not support the idea of imposing anything on anyone; we support reaching an agreement.

The psychological situation is new, and there are good intentions for cooperation. We should seek the best way, however, through patient discussion, agreement, and harmonious views. Therefore, it does not matter whether the eight parties meet on the 9th or the 15th, or even if it is postponed. All these are secondary issues that cannot be interpreted as though the issue had ended and as though there were no agreement, harmony, or desire. There is desire, and the efforts do exist. The agreement will be reached in light of this.

[Faraj] It is obvious that there are differences in opinion, particularly in the press statements made by Gulf officials. What are the present points of disagreement?

[Musa] No, there is no disagreement, but different interpretations. First, we should define the required security: Gulf security is part of Arab security or regional security. We should decide how to safeguard and guarantee this security, what the soundest method of cooperation and presence is, and how a force will be added to another force, or how a force can be replaced by another force. There are many methods. These are not differences, but interpretations on how to reach the objective we agreed on.

Therefore, there is agreement on the objective, a general desire among the eight countries, and a harmony in opinions on the general desire to reach a security arrangement. The interpretations appear here: How can this be accomplished? What is the best way to achieve this? This does not mean there are differences, but that the interpretations are active.

[Faraj] What about Iran?

[Musa] Iran is a different matter. We say and believe that every state within the region or neighboring it has the right to voice its views if it so wishes. Every state has the right to stress its interests, voice its desires, and to follow whatever policy it opts for. We listen well, and we argue.

We must shun the practice of making remarks to the press and media which other states deem harmful to them. Therefore, after the exchange of some statements, the Iranian subject calmed down.

We are ready to listen to what Iran precisely wants to say, and reach an understanding on that. We only declared our stand, which states that the issue in question is Arab security in the wake of a major Arab event which led to all these repercussions.

Of course, Iran is a neighbor. Therefore, we want to hear from it. Not all its interests necessarily contradict our Arab interests. Some interests may agree in this regard. We are ready to welcome areas of agreement between Iranian and Arab interests. We are ready to listen and to understand, provided that Iran displays the same readiness.

Despite everything, Iran is a sisterly Islamic state, and we respect it and its people. We have close historical relations with it. It cannot be considered to be just like any other state, as it was said.

[Faraj] This means it will not join the Gulf security order?

[Musa] We are talking about a security order concerning eight Arab states.

[Faraj] There is no place for a ninth state?

[Musa] Up to this moment, we have not received any membership request from a ninth state.

[Faraj] But Iran made that request?

[Musa] No, Iran is talking about its interests. I welcome discussion of its interests, listening to it, and coordinating with it if it so wishes. But as for us within the framework of eight, we will meet and continue to meet within that framework. This must not at all be considered to be against Iran or any other state. It is sincere coordination between the eight states to maintain their collective security.

Once again, I say that upon reviewing the Damascus Declaration agreed upon by the eight states, we find that it is based on the UN Charter, the Arab League Charter, and the Collective Defense Pact. These are Arab charters. Therefore, we are dealing within an Arab framework.

[Faraj] Then there is no non-Arab partner within this security framework?

[Musa] In order not to go too far, I will say that we are still at the stage of discussions. At this point I do not want to confirm or deny anything. The issue is still under discussion. It concerns security, which the eight states are interested in, in accordance with the Damascus Declaration.

[Faraj] But what if we suppose that the Gulf states are more willing to have an actual Iranian participation?

[Musa] What do you by an actual participation? Do you want to say that you have information that the Gulf states want Iranian forces?

[Faraj] This is not information, but is what is currently being raised through the mass media.

[Musa] There are things being said, and there are certain concepts and certain interests.

[Faraj] Supposing that Gulf interests were in harmony with Iran's policy and an Iranian membership in the security order were agreed to, what would your stand be then?

[Musa] We do not comment on such assumptions. Since such an idea does not exist, we are only talking about a hypothesis. And since we are talking about hypotheses, I can also talk to you about hypotheses. I need not voice policies on hypotheses.

In principle, we are ready to listen to what Iran has to say. Iran should also be ready to listen to what Egypt and other states have to say. The Gulf states have not said anything that supports your hypothesis. Then why should we not jump to conclusions or to certain hypotheses. I will not express a position on a hypothetical issue. I will voice a position on an existing issue.

[Faraj] But what is the true reason behind bringing the Egyptian Army back home from the Gulf and then deploying new forces with different specifications and fewer in number?

[Musa] The Egyptian forces that participated in defending and liberating Kuwait and in confronting the aggression had specific requirements. They did their job, and there was no need to maintain the previously existing requirements. We are now talking about a different framework. This framework has different requirements. This explains the withdrawing of the forces and then sending them back again to the Gulf.

[Faraj] Some press statements by Egyptian and Gulf officials dealt with Egypt's share of contracts for the reconstruction of Kuwait, and it has been noted that Egyptian rights are being ignored. What do you think?

[Musa] In fact, there is an understanding on cooperation in this regard. I do not believe that there are Egyptian officials who said Egypt's rights are being ignored. Some press articles dealt with that, however, and some views have been raised.

[Faraj] Will Egypt take part in the reconstruction of Kuwait?

[Musa] Certain companies are operating in the public and private sectors. This issue is left to these companies. It is definitely in our interest to support our companies' participation in reconstruction. It is in the interest of the Egyptian state and society that Egyptian companies take part in the reconstruction effort alongside other world companies. There is no need at all for reconstruction to be carried out by companies of specific nationalities only. On the contrary, an Arab is better if he is capable of taking part. Egyptian companies can take part in some fields, but not all of them. They have actually begun work. Of course, companies look for more. There is a desire for more participation. The objective of these companies is to participate in reconstruction and to assert their identity and profits.

[Faraj] What about the Egyptians who left Kuwait? Have you received promises from the Kuwaitis that they will be returned or that their rights will be secured?

[Musa] There is coordination between us and the Kuwaitis regarding the Egyptians working there and their rights and other matters. Of course, Kuwait has emerged exhausted from the recent war. It should not be blamed for many of the measures it is taking. We only hope that this is a transitional stage. Cooperation, of course, takes place within the framework of Kuwaiti security, as it always has.

[Faraj] Let us move on to the basic issue—the Palestine question. What do you think of the U.S. initiative in light of Israeli intransigence? How do you view a settlement? Have you reached any results through your meeting with a Palestinian delegation under Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]?

[Musa] Discussions with the delegation are continuing. Now let us start from the beginning. The Palestine question is the basic issue in the Middle East. If it remains unresolved, many other issues will remain unresolved, and other problems will arise. Therefore, the basic objective of diplomatic

and political action in the Middle East is to resolve the Palestine question and reach a settlement for this issue. This requires a negotiations process within the framework of a conference to be attended by big powers, the United Nations, and concerned states, including the Palestinians and the Israelis. This is what we are working on now. The Baker initiative is still alive. In my opinion, it has a fifty-fifty chance.

Overall cooperation to lend momentum to this process is vital and necessary, because time is not on the side of the Arabs. The continued Israeli settlement policy and the mass emigration to Israel go against the opportunities for the Palestinians. The faster we move toward reaching a peace conference on the basis of land for peace, the better. Therefore, we strongly support the launching of the peace process as soon as possible. Otherwise, the ones that stand to lose will be the Palestinians. They may or may not obtain their rights, and they will end up the real losers.

[Faraj] But they have made many concessions, and the ball is in the Israeli court now, is it not?

[Musa] Yes, much was presented, but the ball is not in the Israeli court. The international community is ready to support the peace process and push things toward a peace conference. Consequently, there should be a complete trend and momentum to convince Israel to sit down at the negotiating table. This is an important issue, because Israel today is in a strong position. It has the land and the immigrants, and it is demanding money to build settlements. Thus, it will have money, people, and land. Do we want to support this situation? First, we must ask Israel to stop the settlements. There should be a halt to building the settlements, and this stoppage could be the most important immediate result of convening the conference.

Of course, we cannot guarantee what will happen, but we will work toward this end. The peace process might produce quick and definite advantages. And the international community, particularly the United States—with its known positions on the settlements—will help us in this. Therefore, we can at least gain something for the Palestinians quickly, because when we stop the process of building settlements we can save Palestinian land.

[Faraj] So far, is it clear whether the conference will be regional or international?

[Musa] Regardless of this, it is incorrect for us, as Arabs, to be concerned about the label and say that if it is a regional conference, we will not attend, or vice versa. All this is a waste of time and an insult to our intelligence, because the differences will be on the exterior, and we would be forgetting the essence, which is the launching of the peace process. You can call it international, regional, or a peace process with no geographical limits. The main thing is that this is the beginning of the peace process. It is important that this process begin as soon as possible, because the names are just words that might get us lost amid titles and names, and forget the essence.

Some opinions speak about an international conference and other things. I do not support these opinions. I support the practical way as long as we safeguard our rights through this way . I do not find reassurance in the objectives of those who insist on labels.

[Faraj] Like Israel?

[Musa] Of course, Israel. If it insists on not holding negotiations and on continuing settlements and displacement, we certainly do not agree with it at all. We disagree with it on all these issues. We agree with it on one thing; namely, that it is a basic party to the equation of the peace process and it has specific requirements. We say to them: Yes, you have requirements, but address them within Resolution 242. We agree with Israel within this framework.

[Faraj] What about Palestinian representation in the peace conference?

[Musa] Palestinian representation is a necessary issue; they should participate, because they are a major party.

[Faraj] In what form?

[Musa] Either in the form of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation or in a form to be agreed on. We impose nothing on the Palestinians, but there are proposed formulas.

[Faraj] What is the Egyptian view regarding the nature of the problem and its solution?

[Musa] We are now speaking with the Palestinians on the best methods for this conference, and the joint delegation is one of the existing proposals. It is a logical proposal. Why not? The Jordanian role in the peace process is an important one, especially within the framework of Resolution 242. The Jordanian role existed before this, and the interlinkage between the Jordanian and Palestinian roles is clear.

However, if the Palestinians want another form of representation we can listen to it, because the issue is not closed, and nothing is being imposed on them. But we should reach an understanding and agreement with the Palestinian and Jordanian brothers as well as with the others.

[Faraj] In your opinion, where is the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC]?

[Musa] The ACC has reached a deadlock after what happened in Iraq.

[Faraj] Does this mean that Egypt will withdraw from the ACC or freeze its membership?

[Musa] I say Egypt will neither withdraw nor freeze its membership. I only want to say that the ACC failed and reached a deadlock because of what happened. I do not want to go further than this.

[Faraj] Do you not believe that the affiliation of Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council within the

framework of the Damascus Declaration constitutes a new bloc in the Arab arena?

[Musa] No. It is not a bloc at all, because it is in open cooperation within the Arab League. It is not a secret bloc, a plot, or anything. The policy of blocs is not sound. Any bloc could be against another bloc. This is not aimed at anybody in the Arab world. This cooperation is within the framework of a living experiment to face things in the future. It is not against anybody. Any party can join it through an agreement with the present members and within the framework of the Arab League.

[Faraj] Since the work is within the framework of the Arab League, which includes the Collective Arab Defense Pact, why should it not be within a comprehensive Arab security framework?

[Musa] Regrettably, it has been proven through the Iraqi-Kuwaiti experience that these charters were not soundly implemented. They were toughly tested and it was determined that they need support and reiteration, not review. Consequently, it is important to support and reiterate what we are doing within the framework of the eight countries.

[Faraj] Within the framework of the talk about the Arab homeland, it is known that Egypt's slogan has always been: Hands Off Lebanon.

[Musa] Exactly.

[Faraj] What happened to this slogan?

[Musa] It is not gone. You come and say what happened to this slogan? This is a continuing situation whose complete chapters have not been finished. The situation in Lebanon today is much better, and far fewer hands are playing in it. Therefore, the slogan was at least partly implemented, but the effective factor continues. Lebanon is returning to normal. The current station is one station of a train heading toward a normal situation. I see Lebanon in a better situation today than before. I hope it will continue to move toward a better situation in the near future.

[Faraj] Does this mean that Egypt will continue to demand that Lebanon be purged of any alien presence?

[Musa] No, no. This is not the issue. We are repeating what we have said. We do not raise slogans. We are pragmatic. Experience has taught us to be pragmatic, while maintaining our principles. We support the legitimate Lebanese Government and its decisions. It is necessary to welcome, deal, and cooperate with the legitimate Lebanese Government. It is necessary to let it have a full opportunity to liberate Lebanon. Circumstances are now different. Syrian forces are now helping the legitimate Lebanese Government strengthen its pillars. There is no harm in that, provided it takes place within the framework of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In other words, the crucial word at the end of the Lebanese story is respect for Lebanese sovereignty and guaranteeing its future in light of what the Lebanese themselves, not others, think.

[Faraj] What about Jordanian-Egyptian relations? Will an end be put to media attacks and campaigns and border obstacles?

[Musa] We must interact in the future, because the future cannot be worse than the past. Rather, it must be better. Contacts have started between the heads of the two states, and talks have started on various levels. Therefore, we should be optimistic.

As for relations now, we are working for an Arab reunion, which cannot be effected without Jordan. Otherwise, matters will remain incomplete. Therefore, personally, I am optimistic.

[Faraj] What is the next step in this cooperation?

[Musa] I will not answer this question.

[Faraj] What about the Jordanian-Egyptian meetings which have been postponed several times?

[Musa] The date is not clear. I can add nothing to that.

Commentary on Efforts Toward Peace Conference

NC2007093291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 19 Jul (MENA)—[passage omitted] In its editorial today, AL-JUMHURIYAH writes that the world is optimistic about the future of Middle East peace efforts, particularly in the wake of Syria's positive response to President George Bush's recent initiative.

The paper notes President Mubarak's statement at his joint news conference with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad that the time has come for us to prove to the world that Egypt and Syria want peace and that we will wait to see what the United States will do after receiving the positive Syrian response. The paper says it hopes that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who has started his fifth tour of the region, will realize that this tour has the best chances of success and of getting closer to the actual convocation of the conference, particularly because Baker himself has said that the Syrian stand has created a real possibility for peace negotiations.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: Now that the U.S. initiative has gained a new impetus following the European Community's support and the positive Syrian role, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's stand of rejecting all the international community's appeals remains the main obstacle to the start of the peace negotiations. The U.S. secretary of state has to find a solution, otherwise the situation will deteriorate toward more violence, and stability in the region will remain threatened.

AL-AKHBAR denounced Israel's repeated rejection of the principle of land for peace, a principle the entire world is asking it to accept. In its editorial, it says: Even though Israel always tries to show its willingness to take

part in talks with the Palestinians and other Arab countries, it does not speak about withdrawing from the Arab territories and does not stop building settlements.

The paper then asks: If Shamir insists on excluding any discussion of the principle of land for peace, then what important questions will be dealt with?

Under the headline "The Moment of Truth," AL-AHRAM writes that Israel is getting nearer to the moment of truth while the United States, in word and deed, is standing before a historic test of its credibility and that of the new order toward which it is leading the world.

The paper says that the credit for this goes to the wise Arab stand which learned the lessons of tribulation, understood the rules of the game, and deftly threw the ball into the Israeli corner.

When James Baker arrives in Israel on Sunday following his visits to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, he will find before him an extremist Israeli Government unwilling to give on any issue. This time Shamir's government has to say yes to the peace conference or turn matters upside down for the United States. The paper notes that Baker's mission and his real skills lie in not giving Israel a third option. Baker must ask specific questions, the paper adds, that can only be answered by yes or no so that each party will know where it stands.

In conclusion, AL-AHRAM stresses that the moment of truth in the Middle East has come: Either the huge wheel of peace starts to roll or it will be put out of action for an unforeseeable period.

Daily Says Iraqi Sanctions 'No Longer Justified'

NC2307081191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0620 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Jul (MENA)—AL-AHRAM calls for lifting the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq.

In today's commentary, AL-AHRAM says that the economic sanctions on Iraq are no longer justified because they were imposed to help liberate Kuwait, which has been accomplished.

The paper adds that it is strange that while Israel is openly and arrogantly committing much more than Iraq, no one talks of imposing sanctions on Israel. Instead there is an insistence on reminding everyone that Israel will not even be pressured. The sanctions imposed on South Africa were lifted before elections were even held there.

The paper asks: Why is there this insistence on punishing only the Iraqi people?

AL-AHRAM says the Iraqi people are being subjected to famine, according to the FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organization] report. This is something Arab people everywhere cannot accept because, whatever the circumstances, the Iraqi people are part of the Arab nation's flesh and blood.

'Arafat Cables Congratulations to Mubarak

NC2307195991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1930 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Tunis, 23 Jul (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has sent a congratulatory cable to President Husni Mubarak on the 39th anniversary of the 23 July Revolution.

In the cable, 'Arafat asserted that support provided by Egypt under the leadership of President Husni Mubarak for the just cause of the Palestinian people will help them continue their struggle to achieve a just and peaceful settlement based on UN resolutions. This would enable the Palestinian people to end the Israeli occupation of their land and establish their independent state with its capital in Jerusalem, the first of the two Qiblahs and the third holy place.

Sidqi Returns From Syria, Comments on Visit

NC2007054591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2231 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 19 Jul (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and his delegation returned to Cairo from Damascus this evening following an official five-day visit during which Sidqi participated in the meetings of the Egyptian-Syrian Higher Joint Committee.

Dr. Sidqi described his visit to Damascus as successful and fruitful. In a statement to MENA, he said that the higher committee's next meeting will be held in Cairo in December or early next year.

The prime minister said that agreements were signed to enhance cooperation between Egypt and Syria in all fields in accordance with a number of agreements including the trade program, the agreement to prevent double taxation, and cooperation in the agricultural sphere. [passage omitted]

Jordanian Emissary Concludes Visit, Departs

NC2007195191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 20 Jul [MENA]—Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Jordanian royal court, left Cairo for Amman tonight following a short visit to Cairo. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Promotes Defense Minister to General

NC2107185291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1804 GMT 21 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 21 Jul (MENA)—Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Republic and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, has issued a decision promoting Defense Minister Lieutenant General Husayn Tantawi to the rank of general.

Morocco

King Hassan To Visit United States 26 Sep

LD2307133991 Rabat MAP in English 1202 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Rabat, Jul 23 (MAP)—King Hassan II will undertake September 26 a two day state visit to the United States of America. Bilateral relations, regional and international issues will be tackled during the visit which testifies to the friendly nature of longstanding relations incepted in the early U.S. independence years, says the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rabat. The sovereign's last visit to Washington dates back to 1983. President George Bush visited Morocco in Sept 1983 as Vice-President of the United States.

Minister Briefs Press on New Hydrocarbons Law

LD2?97074391 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Report on news conference by Moroccan Energy and Mines Minister Moulay Driss Alaoui M'Daghri with national and foreign correspondents in Rabat on 22 July]

[Text] In his talk about the new law on exploring and exploiting our country's hydrocarbons, Energy and Mines Minister Moulay Driss Alaoui M'Daghri underlined the aims of that law, which he summarized as reducing the administrative procedures when granting licenses for exploration and exploitation and encouraging and developing the exploration of the hydrocarbon resources. The minister mentioned the general status of that law, which are partially or totally abandoning the mineral licenses, the transfer to the others of the quotas of mineral licenses, the partial or total leasing of licenses, and the temporary concession. The new law includes tax and customs rules and an exchange system. It also includes the new procedures for defining the company tax and paying rent, as well as for determining annual revenues, the oil fee, and tax exemption. This law also includes extraordinary statutes which specify extraordinary incentives aimed at encouraging and instigating the investor to intensify the exploration operations in a fixed period. These legislations will benefit every investor who has started a hydrocarbon entrprise during the 10 years which follow application of this law.

Kuwait

UN Envoy Comments on Gulf War Oil Losses

LD2307185991 London KUNA in Arabic 1738 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Geneva, 23 Jul (KUNA)—Kuwait's UN Ambassador Dr. Salim Jabir al-Ahmad, said in Geneva that Kuwait's losses resulting from the unjust Iraqi occupation range between $50-100 billion.

Dr. Salim told journalists just before the meeting of the UN Reparations Committee here today that the size of the losses will be exactly determined within "the next few months," with the completion of the assessment of the extent of damage in Kuwait.

He stressed that Kuwait is losing between six and seven million barrels of oil daily, at the value of $120 (?million), as a result of the burning oil wells set ablaze by the Iraqi regime during its retreat from Kuwait. He pointed out that it is not known whether the oil wells that have been extinguished will be capable of resuming production. He said that Kuwait is "the biggest victim of the occupation," and expressed the hope that it will receive compensation as soon as possible.

In reply to a question on when he predicts compensation from Iraq will be paid, Shaykh Salim said: "One has to wait and see what the other countries will ask for," and added: "Payment of compensation could take years; perhaps it could take from five to ten years."

The Kuwaiti diplomat said that compensation is not "only for Kuwait, but also to other countries" and pointed out that "some poor countries were affected by the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines, and that they need compensation for the damage inflicted upon them." He emphasized that "those countries should be paid compensation just like Kuwait, which suffered immensely from the unjust occupation," and said that they should top the list for compensation. Shaykh Salim explained that Kuwait is not a member of the Security Council, nor is it represented in the Reparations Committee, but that it will closely follow that committee's meetings.

Foreign Minister on Future Arab Relations

NC2307130991 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 22 Jul 91 p 26-29

[Interview with Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by Chief Editor Hasan Sabra in Kuwait; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Sabra] Following the painful events that have affected all Arabs, do you intend to open a new phase of Arab relations on the basis of "let bygones be bygones" out of concern for the Arab nation's supreme interests?

[Al-Salim] [passage omitted] We have never abandoned our pan-Arab affiliation or policy. We have not abandoned the Arab League; on the contrary, we want to support it. The Kuwaiti people will not forget those who stood against it during the crisis. The Kuwaiti people will protest to the Kuwaiti Government if it now decides to "let bygones be bygones." At any rate, this decision is not subject to discussion now, because the wounds are still fresh. It might be possible to talk about it when they have healed.

[Sabra] A settlement has been reached in Lebanon. Is it possible to bring about a settlement between Kuwait and the Arab countries that did not support it? What are Kuwait's conditions for such a settlement?

[Al-Salim] I do not agree with the word settlement. This would imply that Kuwait was a party to what happened, while the reality was quite the opposite. Kuwait was occupied, its people were dispersed, their honor was violated, and their possessions were stolen. It is not right for Kuwait to sit at the same negotiating table to reach a settlement and thus have the same status as the country that attacked it. The one who made the mistake must pay the price of his error. How can you forgive someone who stabbed you in the back? This is difficult.

[Sabra] It is true that a serious sin has been committed against Kuwait. Both the Kuwaiti and the Iraqi peoples have suffered the consequences of this sin. It seems, however, that Kuwait is inclined to punish all the countries that supported Iraq, even though these countries' masses were demonstrating against the foreign presence in the Arabian peninsula and not in support of Iraq against Kuwait.

[Al-Salim] Let us be frank. When Kuwait makes a decision, it does so on the basis of the clear principle of dealing with governments and not with groups that demonstrate in the streets. We deal with those who consider themselves officials, intellectuals, reasonable people, and thinkers. These are the people who supported Saddam Husayn in his occupation of Kuwait. We did not hear anyone of them say that he opposed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; rather, everyone said that he opposed the foreign and U.S. presence in the Arabian Gulf. Who brought this presence, who caused the loss of the Palestinian issue, and who started this crisis in the first place? Should not the one responsible be brought to account? Should not the responsible Arab rulers have said: Stop O Saddam? [passage omitted]

I do not base my policy on demonstrations in the street. I deal with officials and heads of state. Have Sudan, Yemen, Jordan, the PLO, or Tunis said that they opposed the occupation of Kuwait? Not a single official in these countries has said so. If they support Kuwait, then they should stand up and blame Saddam—but nothing like this has happened so far.

[Sabra] Would it be possible to forget their past actions if they demonstrate their support now?

[Al-Salim] Oh, no. Certainly not. I am afraid that the time for this has passed. [passage omitted]

[Sabra] We have not heard you mention the PLO.

[Al-Salim] The PLO comes and goes, but the important thing is the Palestinian cause, which is still in our hearts. Our understanding of the PLO is another matter entirely.

[Sabra] Is the PLO the Palestinian people's legitimate representative?

[Al-Salim] The cause belongs to all the Arabs. We will not abandon it no matter what happens. [passage omitted]

[Sabra] Do you not think it is unusual that the issue of whether Iran should be included in the Damascus Declaration or involved in the security arrangements for the Gulf region is being raised now, rather than the inclusion of another Arab country?

[Al-Salim] There are distortions, and there are some who use the issue of security arrangements to cause trouble. Iran is an influential country in the region that cannot be ignored. It is a Muslim country, and the Prophet has said we should take care of our neighbors. If my interests require me to be on good terms with China, for example, then why not? Iran is our neighbor, and it has common interests with the Arab Gulf countries. We must consult with one another.

[Sabra] Have the Damascus Declaration countries adopted a unified position on the security arrangements?

[Al-Salim] There are no differences at all.

[Sabra] Sultan Qabus has held a different opinion.

[Al-Salim] Sultan Qabus is member of the group, and the Omani foreign minister will attend the meeting that will be held to discuss the security arrangements. The goal is the same—everyone has endorsed the Damascus Declaration. If some parties think it can be improved, then this can be discussed, and it would not constitute a dispute.

[Sabra] Has a specific agreement been reached about the role of Egypt, Syria, and other countries?

[Al-Salim] It has been agreed that the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, Egypt, and Syria should cooperate for the interest of the Arab countries.

[Sabra] What is the real story regarding the Egyptian decision to withdraw from the Gulf, and the reports that Syria has withdrawn the bulk of its forces?

[Al-Salim] Let me explain the circumstances. The role played by the forces that came to help liberate Kuwait is no longer necessary. The Egyptian soldier is still in Kuwait, however, and so is the Syrian and the United Arab Emirates soldier. We have the scenario of the soldier who came for a specific duty, whose mission has ended, and who has returned. The soldier who remains has another duty. Six Egyptian soldiers were killed in a mine explosion yesterday.

[Sabra] The Damascus Declaration provides for an Egyptian-Syrian force to form the nucleus of an Arab army which will protect the Gulf region. The Kuwaiti defense minister has said that 5,000 Egyptian troops are enough. Is this not regarded as a retreat or a contradiction, or does Kuwait have another option to ensure its security?

[Al-Salim] The principle is what counts. The numbers 5,000 or 100,000 are immaterial, and a symbolic presence means full participation. Regrettably, an Arab soldier stands against an Arab soldier. What is important is that the principle is in line with security requirements. For example, if you asked me how many soldiers are protecting me, I would tell you that I do not know.

A security committee headed by Sultan Qabus has been formed to study the future of Gulf security. After what has happened, it is necessary to conduct a new study considering the future of the Gulf Cooperation Council as a military force and a cooperative unit. Due to the importance of this issue, the task has been entrusted to Sultan Qabus, who is a military man and a graduate of military schools. He understands the language of the military.

[Sabra] Is it likely that we will see other Arab forces in the Gulf?

[Al-Salim] If they join the Damascus Declaration, why not? God willing, we will not use Arab weapons against other Arab weapons, because they have been used against each other enough. [passage omitted]

[Sabra] We have considered the Kuwaiti Government's decision to commute the death sentences to life imprisonment to be a positive development. We would, however, have preferred this to have been initiated by a resolution from the government rather than under pressure from opposing voices abroad.

[Al-Salim] No, no. As journalists and writers, you must not be fooled by such matters. Even those who attempted to assassinate the amir of Kuwait, including the man who tried to kill Jabir al-Ahmad, were not executed. This uproar is being launched by Yasir 'Arafat and his group. Yasir 'Arafat threatened us and said: I will reach you, Jabir al-Ahmad, in your bedroom. Is this a way to improve the situation or does it complicate things further? What position will a Kuwaiti take when he hears such words? Shaykh Tamimi threatened us and said that it is permissable to spill a Kuwaiti citizen's blood.

[Sabra] But similar words written in a Kuwaiti paper told the Palestinians to "allow us to eat your flesh," among other things.

[Al-Salim] This a journalistic opinion, and not that of a state. The Kuwaiti press is free. The Kuwaiti citizen is peaceful and tolerant by nature. We will not, however, submit to Yasir 'Arafat's threats, nor to the threats of others. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister, National Council To Meet 24 Jul

LD2307165391 London KUNA in Arabic 1325 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 23 Jul (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti National Council held its weekly ordinary session here this morning under the chairmanship of 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Misa'id to complete its agenda. [passage omitted]

The speaker of the council adjourned the session this afternoon. A special session will be held tomorrow morning. This special session is at the invitation of the council speaker, in which he invited his highness the heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah; the members; and ministers to attend.

It is expected that the Council will discuss in this session—which will turn into one held behind closed doors—several important issues, including prisoners and missing persons held by the Iraqi regime, the issue of internal security, the Damascus Declaration, and the problems of foreign companies fighting oil well fires and their agents.

Oman

Central Bank: No Reason for Concern Over System

JN2307155491 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] The Central Bank of Oman has stressed that it firmly backs the banking system in the Sultanate of Oman, and that the National Bank of Oman Ltd. [NBO] enjoys the full support and backing of the Central Bank of Oman.

A press statement by the Central Bank of Oman today said the NBO is a local bank licensed to operate in the Sultanate. It is managed by an independent board of directors supported by a team of experienced bankers. It operates under the supervision and control of the Central Bank of Oman, and enjoys a sound financial situation.

The Central Bank of Oman would like to reassure the depositors in general that there is no reason for concern over the NBO.

Saudi Arabia

Defense Minister Receives Syrian War Commander

LD2307213791 Riyadh SPA in English 1928 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Jeddah, July 23, SPA—Prince Sultan bin-'al-al-'Aziz, second deputy premier, defence and aviation minister and insepector general, received here today Major-General 'Ali Habib, the commander of the Syrian force which participated in the Desert Storm operations.

Speaking on the occasion Prince Sultan highlighted the existing fraternal relations between the Kingdom and Syria.

At the end of the meeting they exchanged memorial presents.

Yemen

Salih Receives Message From Somali President

JN2307191991 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, has received a message from brother Mahdi Mohamed Ali, interim president of Somalia. The message deals with developments in Somalia and efforts to achieve reconciliation among all Somali factions to establish peace and stability in the country. The message was conveyed by brother Said Cawl Hussein, Somali minister of state for reconstruction and settlement, when the brother chairman received him today.

During the meeting, the brother chairman stressed our country's concern about the unity and stability of fraternal Somalia, and its support for all efforts to achieve reconciliation and maintain security, stability, and peace for fraternal Somali people.

The meeting was attended by brother Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, minister of state for foreign affairs; Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah, minister of local administration; Muhammad 'Awad, deputy minister of works; and the Somali charge d'affaires in Sanaa.

Foreign Minister Views Bush Remarks in Ankara

JN2307133791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1220 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Jul (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has declared that U.S. President Bush can convince no one inside or outside Iraq with his attempt to shirk responsibility for the economic blockade and its painful effects, or with his allegation that he has no quarrel with the people of Iraq.

In a statement to INA commenting on Bush's remarks during a news conference in Ankara on 20 July, the foreign minister said that Iraqis are strongly and clearly demanding that the unjust blockade imposed on them be lifted and that interference in their internal affairs end. He said Iraqis have stressed that they are on the side of leader Saddam Husayn and reject the custodianship and mandate to which Bush is persistently referring.

He added that the blockade Bush and his allies have imposed is fully to blame for the suffering of Iraqi children, the elderly, and others. In this regard, he noted that the Iraqi people are suffering unprecedented distress and pain.

The foreign minister rebutted Bush's allegation that the Iraqi Government is withholding food from the people of Iraq. He stated that world public opinion and humanitarian and international institutions, as well as the UN secretary general's envoys, have been acquainted with the food distribution system announced in newspapers and other local mass media. The food is distributed equally and in accordance with a fair program, despite the circumstances of the inhuman year-long blockade.

Ahmad Husayn stressed that allied enforcement of UN Security Council resolutions has exceeded the specific goal of driving the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. Moreover, Bush has for the first time referred to the comprehensive destruction of Iraq's infrastructure, the starving of its people, the ban on medicine, its gravely endangered national unity, interference in its internal affairs, and the fomenting of sectarian and racial disturbances among its people.

The minister added that when heads of state stay in their posts, this does not depend on anyone's wishes or satisfaction, because it is one of the inalienable rights of people to chose their systems and leaders without foreign custodianship or interference.

He added that the U.S. President's reiteration of his wishes and dreams, in relation to Iraq and its leader President Saddam Husayn, constitutes a violation of the UN Charter, which prohibits interference in the internal affairs of member states.

Minister Says 6,000 Children Dead From Embargo

JN2307205091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2008 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] New York, United Nations, 23 Jul (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has said that most of Iraq's assets abroad are either frozen or mortgaged, which hinders the possibility of using them to fund the Iraqi people's current needs for foodstuffs and medicine and avoid a potential disaster.

In a letter he sent yesterday to the chairman of the UN Sanctions Committee, the foreign minister said the Iraqi people are currently experiencing many economic difficultics and problems resulting from the economic blockade. There is an urgent need to allow Iraq to export sufficient quantities of its oil to pay for the necessary foodstuffs and medicines and import the humanitarian needs that ensure minimum living requirements.

Mr. Husayn said Iraq's reserve stock of foodstuffs and medicines has been depleted as a result of the economic blockade and the war destruction, which hindered appropriate distribution and marketing. Large amounts of this stock were also ruined or burned by internal sabotage, which a neighboring country played a major role in creating and nurturing.

The foreign minister explained in his letter to the Sanctions Committee that the current circumstances, which the Iraqi people are going through, have caused a severe shortage of foodstuffs and medicine, leading to the deaths of about 6,000 children. He said continued deterioration of these conditions may cause the deaths of about 170,000 children by the end of this year, as shown in the report of a Harvard University team that recently visited Iraq.

The foreign minister concluded his letter by saying that the rules of right and justice, and the principles of the United Nations dictate saving the people of Iraq, sparing Iraq's children and elderly from an imminent catastrophe, and allowing the country to export its oil to obtain foodstuffs, medicine, and urgent humanitarian needs in accordance with Paragraph 23 of Security Council Resolution 687.

INA Reacts to Iranian Official's POW Remarks

JN2307203191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1931 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Jul (INA)—The INA international affairs editor has affirmed that Iraq has handed over all Iranian POW's it had held, whether registered or not registered, and that this took place under supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

This came in a comment on the statements of Hasan Habibi, vice president of the Iranian regime, that were transmitted by the Iranian news agency. In his statements, Habibi said there are about 5,000 Iranian POW's in Iraq, that his regime asked Iraq to provide clarifications about the fate of those people, but that Iraq declined to provide any information in this regard.

The editor explained that Iraq cooperated with the Iranian authorities in Baghdad and Tehran during a series of meetings between the two sides to establish

bases and procedures in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention for 1948 on POW's and searching for those missing in action.

The INA international affairs editor said that despite intensive efforts to convince the Iranian side to agree to the internationally established bases and procedures, the Iranian regime has continued to delay the implementing or even approving these procedures.

The editor added that the Iraqi authorities made it possible for the concerned Iranian authorities to conduct interviews in Baghdad with a number of Iranian prisoners to convince them to return to Iran. Some of them were convinced, and returned to their country. He indicated that all these facilities were offered under the supervision of the Red Cross.

The editor said: However, the Iranian regime insists on holding Iraqi prisoners, contrary to the Geneva Convention, with the aim of achieving exposed and feeble political gains. This regime also continues to follow devious ways and obstruct the Red Cross' humanitarian work for prisoners and their welfare in the detention camps.

The editor asserted: The Tehran regime's allegations of the presence of thousands of Iranian POW's in Iraq is an exposed lie which is aimed at covering up the lies of the leaders of this regime to the Iranian people, who are plagued by their leaders, who refrain from revealing the number of their dead in battle.

Concluding his comment, the INA international affairs editor asked: If the Iranian regime is really serious about the POW issue, why does it not respond to the Red Cross' appeals for implementing the Geneva Convention, return our POW's, and start searching with us for those missing in action?

Two Papers Claim Iranians Behind Riots in North

JN2307132191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0648 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 23 Jul (INA)—Two Iraqi newspapers say that the Iranian regime's invidiousness and its rulers' exposed hypocrisy are part of the alliance hostile to Iraq and its people.

The two papers stress that the Iranian regime, whose policy is primarily based on opportunism, has begun to play a more aggressive and savage role, in line with the aggressive hysteria possessing the U.S. Administration.

In an editorial published today, AL-QADISIYAH says that the Iranian regime, just like the United States, has become jittery, trying to implement the next chapter in the conspiracy against the Iraqi people. The paper adds: The regime concealed its intentions at the outset of the aggression and to maneuver to keep itself free of suspicion regarding its alliance with the United States and the other parties to the aggression. Now that its malignant role has been exposed, especially with regard to the conspiracy's chapter involving the riots carried out by the mobs, it has begun to openly declare its enmity toward Iraq, its people, and its historic leadership, and to translate this enmity, which reflects ingrained hate and a satanic desire to take revenge on those who defeated it, into tangible subversion whenever possible. [passage omitted]

The paper adds: Now that the Iraqi people are experiencing an unjust blockade and are threatened with a new U.S. aggression, the Iranian regime attempts to carry out a second chapter in the grand anti-Iraq conspiracy similar to the one staged by demagogues. Once again, the regime smuggles a group of henchmen and agents into Iraqi Kurdistan to stage bloody riots to accomplish a variety of malicious objectives and undermine Iraq's security and national unity.

The paper goes on to say: A careful examination of the objectives the Iranian regime undoubtedly sought to achieve, in coordination with Washington through riots in Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah Governorates, as well as the timing of these riots, makes it clear to those near and far that it sought to spread anarchy in Iraqi Kurdistan and to prepare the grounds for similar subversion in southern Iraq. The actions meant to be carried out in the southern part of the homeland were aborted, thanks to the precautionary measures Iraq took to thwart the actions of demagogues based on religious sedition and national division. This reflected the national unity agreement between Iraq's Arabs and Kurds whose conclusion is imminent. The agreement will offer autonomous rule and consecrate democratic practices along the path of building and reconstruction.

The paper says: The hostile objective was to spread anarchy and obscure the state authority needed to provide people with security and stability. The attainment of such an objective would have presented the United States with another opportunity to continue its flagrant interference in Iraq's internal affairs. This opportunity would have given it justifications and excuses to execute a new part of the conspiracy, perhaps using the slogan of human rights in Iraq that the United States professes to uphold though it killed Iraqi children and women, destroyed the country's modern infrastructure, and exposed its people to extermination through the disastrous health conditions brought about by the continued and unjust economic blockade. [passage omitted]

Concluding the editorial, the paper says: Now that Iraq is being exposed to this ordeal because of the conspiracy, it can only add the Iranian regime to the list of the countries party to the 30-state aggression. As for the ill winds coming from Iran, they are part of the conspiracy. There is a proverb that says: "Once bitten, twice shy."

In an editorial published today, the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH says: The Iranian rulers have nothing to hide behind. They have exposed all their cards and shown all their evil purposes and intentions. Now no one can pretend to be unaware of their sickening, spiteful hostility. No justifications be found for them, not even flimsy ones. This is because they failed to take advantage

of the great historic opportunity great Iraq offered them through the open letters addressed to them by valiant leader Saddam Husayn, and did not seize the opportunity he granted them later on. They have shown themselves to be incapable of improving their intentions and image. [passage omitted]

The paper says the treacherous 30-state aggression came to expose once and for all the parties that allied themselves to satans within the Iranian regime, and unequivocally shows that this regime and officials in the highest echelons have not learned the lesson. This aggression has shown that they neither have any sense of responsibility nor are marked by a principled code of ethics. They have insolently and cruelly acted contrary to the statements they made through their media and the pledges they made to Arab and Islamic political delegations that visited them and wished that the Iranian rulers could adopt a position that reflects what they say with regard to the 30-state aggression. But in no time, these delegations found that there are certain parties within the Iranian regime that are very interested in maintaining ties with satans, big and small alike; strengthening their satanic ties; and confirming their eagerness to assert the strength of the evil alliance and realize their desires to underminc Iraq, continue interfering in its domestic affairs, and persist in their desperate attempts to disturb its stability and security. [passage omitted]

The paper adds: Then came the acts of sabotage witnessed in beloved northern Iraq, including the incidents that took place in the Governorates of al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil a few days ago, to clearly show that the bad elements that allied themselves to satans within the Iranian regime were involved in planning and implementing these incidents. We will not be mistaken when we unhesitatingly state here that these parties are now working without any cover to implement the dirtiest chapters of the ongoing conspiracy assigned to Iran by the alliance of the 30-state aggression. These chapters are the dirtiest because they target Iraq's national unity, the lives of its citizens, and its efforts to reconstruct the facilities of its people, as well as the foundations of their present and future. Likewise, these chapters are also the dirtiest because they reflect the grudges, ill will, aggression, and cheap treachery aimed at achieving the objectives of the archsatan and the satellite satans, which revolve in its orbit and carry out their orders.

The paper goes on to say: Hence, we would like to tell the Iranian rulers that they are playing a very dangerous game and that the evil role they are playing in the interest of these hostile parties has been completely exposed. [passage omitted]

The paper affirms that Iraq will remain greater than the evil of these hypocritic rulers and renegades, that Iraq's hand will remain stronger than theirs, and that they are the lowest of the lowly.

Iran Said Involved in 'Conspiracy Against Iraq'

JN2407091491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0622 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 24 Jul (INA)—Iraqi newspapers assert that the future will prove to Iran's rulers that their sick dreams and dirty hands cannot harm Iraq's unity, but rather will prompt the Iraqis to unify ranks, strengthen cohesion, continue rebuilding their country, and eliminate the consequences of the aggression against them.

In its article today, AL-JUMHURIYAH says that while Iran pursued a hypocritical policy toward the region's states during Iraq's confrontation of the U.S.-Atlantic invasion of the Gulf region, the period that followed the Imperialist-Atlantic-Zionist military aggression on Iraq revealed beyond any doubt that that policy is merely an obedient tool to carry out the premeditated conspiracy against Iraq. After the 30-state aggression, Iran's role can no longer be viewed outside the imperialist-Zionist framework.

The paper adds: This conclusion is derived from a number of facts that have proved that regime's involvement in the overall evil conspiracy against Iraq, and its involvement in the completion of the 30-state military aggression through a new aggression in which it tried to stir up Iraq's internal situation after it had interfered in Iraq's domestic affairs. It did this while Iraq was preparing to sort itself out after the imperialist-Atlantic-Zionist aggression to be able to deal with the magnitude of the 30-state aggression and reduce its effect on the proud Iraqi people.

The paper also says that through its behavior, the Iranian regime expressed its evil intentions against the Iraqis and their proud, courageous leadership. It says the Iranian policy is merely a humiliated satellite of the U.S.-Zionist policy in the region while the officials of that regime raise so-called hostile slogans against international arrogance in support of the oppressed in the world.

The paper asserts that these false slogans have failed to peddle the regime's real plans against Iraq, especially since the Iranian regime committed an aggression against some areas of our beloved north by sending a group of its mercenaries and supporters to the al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil areas to stir up confusion and riots, at a time when Iraq was preparing to announce the final autonomy agreement to strengthen our people's unity and confront the most fierce economic, political, and military aggression in history led by the imperialist and Zionist forces. [passage omitted]

Kurdish Source Says Palestinians Taken Prisoner

PM2307103091 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 22 Jul 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Pesh Merga Arrest Palestinian Fighters"]

[Text] London, SAWT AL-KUWAYT—Kurdish Pesh Merga fighters captured a number of Palestinians who

fought alongside Iraqi government forces in last week's violent clashes in al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil. In London, a Kurdish official, who is in daily contact with the leadership in Iraqi Kurdistan, has revealed that a preliminary interrogation of the Palestinian captives has revealed that they belong to the "Arab Liberation Front," which is part of Iraq's ruling party; the "Palestine Liberation Front," headed by Abu-al-'Abbas [Muhammad 'Abbas]; and the "Palestine Liberation Army," which is part of to the PLO, headed by Fatah. They revealed that they received instructions from their organizations to work with Iraqi Republican Guard units in suppressing local uprisings and rebellions whenever necessary. Some of them did work for security and intelligence organs.

It is known that Iraqi opposition forces and citizens who fled to neighboring countries have accused Palestinian organizations of taking part with Iraqi Republican Guard forces in suppressing the popular uprisings that erupted in Iraq last March.

Red Cross Receives Arab Deportees From Kuwait

JN2307194291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1815 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Al-Basrah, 23 Jul (INA)—Continuing their arbitrary measures, the Kuwaiti authorities have deported more Arab citizens residing in Kuwait after having detained them and confiscated their property. An INA correspondent in al-Basrah said that a new group of deportees arrived at the Safwan border area this afternoon. The group comprises 77 citizens from Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Tunisia, and Somalia, including women and children.

The deportees were received by a Red Cross and an Iraqi Red Crescent delegation, which offered humanitarian services.

It is noteworthy that Kuwaiti authorities have deported Iraqi and Arab citizens in groups to al-Basrah Governorate on Saturdays and Wednesdays, thus raising the number of deportees to 1,600 citizens. [passage omitted]

Ramadan Receives Kurdish Leader Barzani

JN2307165791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1624 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Jul (INA)—This evening, Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, received Mas'ud Barzani, secretary general of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, and his delegation.

During the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan stressed that sincere intentions and serious determination will achieve the joint central objectives for whose sake we are all working with a responsible, brotherly spirit to serve Iraq and liquidate all plots that aim to harm and weaken Iraq.

Mas'ud Barzani expressed absolute confidence in the wide, prosperous horizons of Iraq's future. He also expressed confidence in the consolidation of Arab-Kurdish brotherhood to live in peace and security under the great tent of Iraq, and to work with one heart and hand in hand to rebuild great Iraq, defend it, and make sacrifices for its sake.

Shamir—Talks With Arab States in 'Month or Two'

TA2307151391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said it now appears we are nearing negotiations with the Arab countries. There are still problems—such as the composition of the Palestinian delegation—but we hope they will be resolved. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is undergoing a process similar to the one experienced by Egyptian leader al-Sadat, which led him to start direct negotiations with Israel. Al-Asad has realized that the Soviet Union has diminished in importance and that the United States is now the only superpower, so that whoever wants to work together with Washington and respect its desire for peace and stability in the region must recognize Israel's existence.

Syria's readiness to negotiate with us directly and without preconditions has created a new situation. The prime minister hopes that Israel and its neighbors will begin talks within a month or two.

Similarities Between al-Sadat, al-Asad

TA2407065991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Shamir said that President al-Asad is now making different statements than in the past, and we are listening to what he has to say. The prime minister made these statements to IDF Radio. Shamir said that there is a similarity between the moves of al-Asad and al-Sadat regarding Israel, while Foreign Minister David Levi told us that he will try to coordinate an official state visit by Prime Minister Shamir to Egypt in the near future. Levi said that Israel is waiting for U.S. answers regarding the composition of the Palestinian delegation and not the other way around. Our Arab affairs correspondent Gay Bekhor reports:

[Begin recording] [Bekhor] It was difficult not to discern the obvious satisfaction of Prime Minister Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levi yesterday evening when they arrived at the reception marking the anniversary of the Egyptian officers revolution held annually by Ambassador Basyuni at the Daniel Hotel. What could be a more fitting background to talk about the peace process with Syria than the Egyptian flags fluttering in the hall? We asked our first question of Prime Minister Shamir after he was quoted yesterday surprisingly comparing Presidents al-Asad and al-Sadat.

[Shamir] I did not see what the media reported but there is some similarity in their political starting points. Both presidents launched their moves according to their assessment of the international situation. Not the regional situation, but the international situation. It was the same with al-Sadat and now with al-Asad.

[Bekhor] Mr. Prime Minister, many Israelis are asking themselves, how has al-Asad changed? We all know him, and you have known him for over 20 years.

[Shamir] We do not know him. We hear what he is saying. Today he is saying different things than yesterday. That is all. [passage omitted]

[Bekhor] Foreign Minister David Levi, who is leaving for Egypt in a few days, promised that he would arrange a similar visit for the prime minister very soon. I asked the foreign minister whether he would also arrange a visit for Shamir.

[Levi] I will try, certainly. This question is something I have often raised with statesmen who spoke to President Mubarak and through Secretary of State Baker, who raised the issue. I hope that now with this positive development, something we have been working toward that should have always been obvious will take place shortly.

[Bekhor] In light of the recent developments, do you really believe that this meeting will take place shortly?

[Levi] I have no doubt that the leaders of the countries will meet and that this is a process in which everyone is contributing toward success. We must have faith, that is all. [end recording]

'Understanding' on Veto of Delegation Requested

TA2407050991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Israel is still requesting that some understanding be formulated that would enable the convening of the regional conference. Secretary of State Baker's advisers and Israeli officials have formulated the draft of a document of understanding that deals with both the composition of the Palestinian delegation and the negotiation procedures. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports on the political process:

One can say that the bottom line is that if the current political move gets on the road, we can expect not only the realization of the dream of direct negotiations between Israel and its neighbors, but also the renewal of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and a visit by Prime Minister Shamir to Moscow, and the thawing of the cold peace with Egypt and a meeting between Shamir and President Mubarak. First, however, we have to deal with the negotiations.

At this stage things are being handled on two levels: the level of declarations or newspaper headlines, and the level of what is written between the lines. On the level of declarations, Foreign Minister David Levi's statement yesterday that nearly all the problems have been resolved and Prime Minister Shamir's expression of hope that talks with the Arab countries could begin within a month or two are worthy of mention. Nevertheless, Shamir pointed out that several problems still remain, such as the composition of the Palestinian delegation. This issue falls between the lines. A draft copy of a document of understanding composed by Secretary of State Baker's advisers and Israeli officials, which completes the document partially formulated several weeks ago, stipulates

the following: The Palestinians have the right to choose their representatives to the joint delegation with Jordan, and it is agreed that the Palestinian delegation will be made up only of Palestinian residents of the territories who agree to negotiations in stages and are ready to commit themselves to living in peace with Israel.

Another clause states that the countries sponsoring the negotiations, the United States and the Soviet Union, understand that no party, including Israel, should be forced to sit down with any party that it finds unacceptable. This means that Israel has a veto on the composition of the Palestinian delegation. Another clause notes that the first issue that Israel will discuss with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will be Palestinian self-rule for a period of five years. These negotiations will end within a year. After three years of self-rule, negotiations will be started on the permanent arrangements, and the United States proposes that an Arab resident of East Jerusalem also be included in the talks at this stage.

As for the framework of the negotiations, the United States has promised Israel and the Arab countries that it will send the copy of the invitations beforehand so that all the parties will be able to comment as they see fit. The opening session will last two days and not a week or two as suggested by Syria, and the working teams will convene two to four weeks after the opening session. At this stage it still remains unclear if there will be a working team between Israel and Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, or whether the representatives of these countries will simply join an umbrella committee [va'adat 'al] that will discuss regional issues such as water, ecology, arms disarmament, and so forth.

It is now clear that Prime Minister Shamir's statements regarding the change in Syrian President al-Asad's position were not only based on the impressions of U.S. officials but also upon the assessments of Israeli analysts, who estimate that al-Asad's only way to obtain any achievements lies through direct negotiations with Israel. This assessment is based, among other things, on the intensive efforts al-Asad has made to prepare the Syrian leadership and the military for the change in his position. One can therefore say that history is working overtime in the Middle East.

No U.S. Promise on Veto Right

TA2407054991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] What was termed the last obstacle on the road to the conference is still without a true solution. Baker's aides, who left Israel yesterday, did not present a draft letter on the [U.S.] assurances or the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

The United States has suggested that at the initial stage, residents of East Jerusalem and the Palestinian diaspora not be incorporated in the process. They would join it at the second stage of the talks, during the discussion of the permanent arrangements. This idea was presented to the Palestinians about a month ago in Washington. They, however, have not adopted it yet.

Israel insists that East Jerusalem representatives not take part in the regional conference. According to recent statements, the Palestinians do not agree to give up on this representative. In addition, the United States does not explicitly offer Israel the right to veto the Palestinian representatives to the negotiations. According to suggestions by the U.S. officials, Israel does not have to sit with anyone it finds unacceptable. This phrasing refers to the problem of the PLO representation in the delegation but is not to be interpreted as a right to veto each Palestinian representative on a personal basis. This is an attempt to calm Israel's fears of PLO participation in the conference.

In the next few days, the United States is expected to deliver to Israel an official document which will include the U.S. promises concerning the structure of the conference and the composition of the Palestinian delegation. All that is left to be seen now is whether the Israeli optimism will overcome the bone of contention over the Palestinian representation or whether will we return to the old Baker questions concerning the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

Knowledge of Memorandum of Understanding Denied

TA2407103191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Avi Pazner, the prime minister's spokesman, has denied all knowledge of an alleged draft memorandum of understanding between Israel and the United States. American sources also reacted skeptically to the report. More from our political correspondent Jack Katzenell:

According to Qol Yisra'el's parliamentary reporter, the draft memorandum of understanding was drawn up by the American diplomats left behind by Secretary of State James Baker, in negotiations with Israeli officials. [passage omitted]

The prime minister's spokesman, Avi Pazner, told me a short while ago that he knows nothing of any such draft memorandum, and he treated the report with acute skepticism. American sources also reacted skeptically. One of them referred me to Secretary Baker's news conference in Jerusalem, that no promises will be made to any party to the negotiations without the other parties being informed of it.

Levi Rejects Link Between Settlements, Talks

TA2407091591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi said that Israel remains adamantly opposed to any linkage between ending the Arab boycott and calling a halt to settlement activity. Responding to a question by Likud Knesset Member [MK] 'Uzi Landau, the foreign minister told the

Knesset plenum that the government has no intention of changing its policy regarding settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

Our correspondent Gil Litman points out that when answering a question by MK Ran Kohen from the Citizens Rights Movement, the foreign minister said that Israel is not being demanded to halt settlements as a condition for continuing the political process. Levi revealed that such a demand had been considered but that in the end Israel had not been asked to fulfill such a condition.

Minister Rejects East Jerusalem Representative

TA2407055591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Justice Minister Dan Meridor by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Good morning, Justice Minister Dan Meridor.

[Meridor] Good morning.

[Zohar] I think that we have already heard all the general statements about the change, the breakthrough, and the opportunity, and we are now getting back down to the small details before setting a date for the regional conference. Could you shed some light on whether there is really a U.S. condition, which actually constitutes an Arab position, that an East Jerusalem representative will participate in the regional conference?

[Meridor] I will answer you in a minute but first I would like to say something, with your permission. One needs patience. We are at the sensitive stages of a process that started several months ago. This process is something we want. We think that the time is ripe as always, but perhaps more so now than ever before, to start a move toward direct negotiations. This has always been our desire. One must be careful, however, not to hold a stopwatch in one's hand, because this is a serious struggle between conflicting interests, interests that are very crucial to us as opposed to those of the Arabs. If we press too hard we may lose ground on important positions. Now....

[Zohar, interrupting] Well, it is the United States that is pressing.

[Meridor] Just let me continue answering your question. There has been a development in Syria that appears to be an interesting and positive one. Our reaction has already been issued. What is left to do? We are waiting to hear from the Americans who are leading this move regarding the composition of the Arab Palestinian representation in the framework of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the negotiations. There are known principles that are acceptable to us, and the United States is aware of them. I hope, and can almost assume, that these principles are accepted by the United States. I think that the dialogue between the United States, the Arabs, the Jordanians, and the Palestinians that U.S. officials have been meeting here in Judaea and Samaria has revolved around this matter, and we are waiting to hear the results.

[Dan] Mr. Meridor, I would like to go back to Gay's question. Beyond the clarifications, is the United States a party to the demand that an East Jerusalem resident participate in the Palestinian delegation?

[Meridor] No.

[Dan] There is no such demand?

[Meridor] We have received no such request. I do not want to complicate things with unnecessary details, but I can tell you that when I met the secretary of state in the United States almost four months ago and the U.S. plan was actually revealed to us for the first time, I left the meeting with good reason to assume that this question would not constitute a problem in our relations with the United States and that the issue could be overcome. We are adamant in our position that Jerusalem does not fall within the framework of the autonomy—and the talks, after all, are about the autonomy. Therefore, the composition of the delegation should be subsequently quite clear.

[Zohar] This also implies that Israel will not object if it is now already agreed that during the second stage of discussions on the permanent arrangements, three years after the institution of autonomy, an East Jerusalem representative will join the talks. Would this compromise proposal be acceptable, at least to you personally?

[Meridor] I certainly do not think so. We are not dealing right now with what will happen in a few years. Right now we want to consolidate the arrangements of the autonomy and the self-rule. This is the U.S. plan and this is our agreement. This is what should be agreed to and I imagine that the Arabs have accepted this because this is the basis for the entire affair. After we reach agreement on autonomy—and the negotiations will not be easy or short—and we implement it in the field for a few years, then when negotiations on the permanent arrangements start in a few years or whenever we will discuss the final stages. I want to state categorically, however, that Jerusalem is part of the State of Israel and anything pertaining to Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip should not be applicable to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is under Israeli sovereignty. I would like to say that the Arabs are insisting on an East Jerusalem representative precisely because of this. Therefore, I hope that in the battle over Jerusalem the determination of the Jewish people will prove stronger.

[Dan] Mr. Meridor, we have heard that Israel has insisted that President al-Asad allow all the Syrian Jews to leave as a test of his positive intentions. Is this some kind of precondition Israel is issuing now just when Syria is repeatedly declaring that it has placed no preconditions for negotiations?

[Meridor] I have heard nobody saying that Israel has placed any preconditions except for the Israeli media. We are placing no preconditions...

[Dan, interrupting] But is there is such a precondition or demand by Yitzhaq Shamir, however you choose to call it?

[Meridor] I will not call it something that it is not. I will not term it a precondition or anything of the sort. We are presenting our position. We have heard of the developments in Syria. The United States has given us details, and we have received reports. We reacted at once by saying that if these reports are true, then that was a positive development. Perhaps our wise position, which is sometimes stubborn and sometimes flexible, led Syria to change its stance. However, this matter is very important to us. There are approximately 5,000 Jews left in Syria and their situation there is known. They are prisoners in Syria and not free to leave. We think that it is correct to raise this issue and to demand their release.

[Dan] As a condition or not as a condition?

[Meridor] I said before that we made no conditions. We demand the release of the Syrian Jews. We demanded that the Ethiopian Jews be allowed to leave, and they are in Israel after a long political struggle and through other means. We demanded the release of Soviet Jewry. As a Jewish state we must allow all Jews who so desire to come to Israel, especially when they are living under regimes such as the Syrian one. When the United States and Syria are holding such intensive contacts, when Syria needs the Americans, I think that this is the right time to raise the issue of this Diaspora and demand that they be allowed to come to Israel.

[Zohar] Thank you very much, Justice Minister Dan Meridor.

'Mistake' To Rule Out Syrian Talks Over Golan

TA2407042491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Senior military sources have said that although the Golan Heights have a crucial strategic value, it would be a mistake to rule out negotiations with Syria. The political process may engender a real chance of getting another major Arab country out of the circle of hostility with Israel.

The sources nevertheless pointed out that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] had not discussed any alternatives or plans at this stage, even though it is clear that if the regional picture changes the Army's plans will be affected, including the IDF's multiyear plan.

At any rate, the military sources stressed that in light of prevailing conditions in the region, one must be wary of drawing conclusions or withdrawing troops. Political processes do not bring immediate results.

Labor's Peres, Beilin on Golan Heights Issue

TA2207104691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] In the Labor Party, Knesset Member Shim'on Peres says that if Israel says no to the Americans, she will be isolated and her problems will grow larger. In an interview with Qol Yisra'el this morning, Peres said he would not be prepared to give up the Golan Heights. The Labor Party leader said he would prefer to deal with substantive issues that are in dispute between Israel and the Palestinians.

Labor Knesset Member Yosi Beilin says, however, that he is convinced that his party will support a territorial concession on the Golan Heights for peace. Beilin points to the fact that Labor Knesset members voted against the annexation of the Golan Heights.

Right-Wing Parties Mull Withdrawal From Coalition

Tehiya To Recommend Leaving

TA2407122491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The Tehiya Knesset faction has decided to convene the party institutions next week and to recommend that the Tehiya resign from the government in light of recent political developments. The final decision on this matter will be made when the Tehiya Central Committee convenes next week. Our Knesset correspondent Dov Gilhar reports.

[Begin recording] [Gilhar] Consultations in the Tehiya faction and the right-wing parties were held this afternoon. During the consultations the Moledet faction said it would discuss the issue at the meeting of its central committee. The Tehiya announced that its Knesset faction and secretariat would recommend that the central committee declare its immediate withdrawal from the government in light of the recent developments in the political arena. Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen told us that until now only technical matters that were holding up the conference had been discussed; now, however, fundamental issues, which in the Tehiya's opinion could endanger Israel's security, were on the line, such as implementing the autonomy plan or the permanent participation of a representative from East Jerusalem in the talks. This at least, appears to be the position of the United States. We spoke with Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen a short while ago.

[Kohen] We do not think that Shamir has already given up anything, nor is he ready to give up anything tomorrow. Today, however, he has already opened all the doors that could lead to many concessions.

[Gilhar] Is there wide backing in the central committee for this readiness to resign from the government? Could there not be a situation similar to that in Moledet, in

which the faction and the secretariat have recommended withdrawing but the central committee has rejected their recommendations?

[Kohen] I know that the Tehiya's central committee is very sensitive to political and ideological issues, and all of us are graduates of Camp David in the sense that we know that if you enter the corridor leading to a trap, you cannot just stop on the way. I believe the central committee will endorse the secretariat's recommendation to resign immediately.

[Gilhar] The Moledet faction made exactly the same statements several weeks ago and recommended to the central committee to withdraw from the coalition, but the committee rejected the suggestion. This could also happen in the case of the Tehiya faction. At any rate, the Tehiya faction comprises three Knesset members whose resignation could shrink the coalition to 63 Knesset members. [end recording]

Tzomet To Quit Over Any Concession

TA2307112691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] The Tzomet faction will not remain in a government that is ready to make territorial concessions. This is what Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan said today upon returning from a visit to the Soviet Union. Our correspondent 'Idan Miller met with Minister Eytan, and here is the report:

[Begin recording] [Miller] Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan returned from a two-week tour of the Soviet Union this morning. Minister Eytan landed right in the midst of the political frenzy that followed Syrian President al-Asad's statements and the visit of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. I am still not familiar with all the details, he said. I will be updated by tomorrow morning, and then I will able to formulate both Tzomet's and my own clear position. What is clear, however, is the fact that Tzomet will not lend its hand to territorial concessions.

[Eytan] Tzomet cannot participate in a government that will give up territories—not just the Golan Heights, but any territories whatsoever.

[Miller] As a former chief of staff, you are aware of the security importance of the Golan Heights. There are people who are saying, however, that in the course of negotiations with Syria, the Golan Heights can be returned without endangering Israel's security.

[Eytan] Those very same people may also believe that we can go back to the Green Line in Tulkarm. I do not think that is the case. I believe that the strongest thing that is deterring the Syrians from starting a war and that will continue to deter them in the future is our deployment on the Golan Heights, a mere 60 km from Damascus.

[Miller] What if Shamir gives Baker a positive answer?

[Eytan] I do not know what Baker asked and what Shamir replied.

[Miller] In the Soviet Union, Minister Eytan met with Soviet Vice President Yanayev. The two men discussed, among other things, the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. Yanayev told Eytan that there is no chance of renewing relations until the problems of the settlements and the settlement of immigrants in the territories are resolved.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1005 GMT on 23 July adds that Eytan brought back a framework agreement on agricultural cooperation between Israel and the Soviet Union. The agreement still requires the government's endorsement. With regard to the renewal of diplomatic relations, Eytan said that aside from Yanayev, "everyone else said that diplomatic relations should be resumed and swiftly. This will happen quickly. None of our interlocutors, aside from the vice president, made any conditions."]

Palestinian Press, Notables on Current Process

'Details' of 'Syrian Response'

TA2307145691 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 22 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] Details of the Syrian Response:

1. That the settlement be based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

2. Participation of the United Nations, regardless of the shape of this participation.

3. Readiness for bilateral negotiations with Israel inside the conference.

4. No commitment to European participation.

5. Signing of the final agreement at the United Nations in the shape of a separate peace treaty.

6. No insistence on direct PLO participation.

7. Agreement on arrangements by the United Nations with regard to the Golan Heights.

8. Discussing cooperation on questions relating to apportioning water resources.

9. The Palestinians will be represented in a Jordanian delegation.

Before the conference begins, Damascus will embark on goodwill gestures, including a readiness to end the boycott and withdraw its forces from Lebanon. [final paragraph unnumbered as published]

No Talks Without East Jerusalemite

TA2407101691 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Jul 91 pp A1, 4

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] Senior government sources in Israel and Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hannan 'Ashrawi—two members of the Palestinian delegation which conferred with Secretary of State Baker—yesterday claimed that the firm opposition of the Israeli Government to the demand of the Palestinian leadership in the territories to include representatives from East Jerusalem and the Palestinian diaspora in the conference jeopardizes the entire peace conference.

In their meeting with Baker this week, the Palestinians made clear that there would be no Palestinian delegation if East Jerusalem delegates are not included, since that would be seen as a sign of giving up Jerusalem. They did not change their minds even when Baker made it clear that he could not manage to convince Israel to agree. They also rejected his suggestion that the Jordanian delegation would include a Jordanian of East Jerusalem descent. The Palestinians are demanding that the delegation include a declared representative from East Jerusalem. The local leadership also rejected a Baker proposal to make do with a Jerusalem delegate's joining in the second stage of the talks on the permanent settlement, claiming that the autonomy arrangement does not include Jerusalem anyway. The Palestinians in the territories refuse to make a commitment to avoid pointing to their links to the PLO, which Shamir has demanded as a condition to agreeing to their joining a delegation.

A senior government source said yesterday that threats to al-Husayni's life have already been made in the territories. The Palestinian leaders say that any Palestinian who agrees to participate in a delegation that does not include Jerusalemites endangers his own life. [passage omitted]

More on Delegation Without Jerusalemite

TA2307173191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Fayiz Abu-Rahmah, former chairman of the Gaza Strip Bar Association, said today that there is a possibility of forming a Palestinian delegation to a peace conference with Israel without including in it a resident of East Jerusalem. In an interview with our correspondent Kayid Zahir, Mr. Abu-Rahmah added that there is great hope for the convocation of this conference and that action should be taken to overcome all difficulties and pave the way to the conference. He added that all the parties should abandon any preconditions prior to the conference's convocation, so that they may succeed in launching the conference to draw up a suitable formula for peace in the Middle East.

Journalist Abu-Zayyad on Developments

TA2307154691 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Interview with Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, editor of the East Jerusalem GESHER, by Dan Shilon; Abu-Zayyad in Jerusalem studio, Shilon in Tel Aviv—live]

[Text] [Shilon] Good evening.

[Abu-Zayyad] Good evening.

[Shilon] Do you welcome the latest diplomatic move?

[Abu-Zayyad] Certainly.

[Shilon] Meaning?

[Abu-Zayyad] Meaning that after 43 years, we can now see a real opportunity for progress toward a peace process. I believe this is the first time since 1967 that there have been sincere international efforts to make the parties to the conflict sit at the negotiating table to find a political solution to the conflict.

[Shilon] When you talk about the parties, do you mean the PLO or the Arabs of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District?

[Abu-Zayyad] The Palestinian side is the Palestinian people, who are represented by the PLO.

[Shilon] Excuse me, who said that was so?

[Abu-Zayyad] Just ask every Palestinian on the streets in the territories.

[Shilon] But no elections have been held in the territories.

[Abu-Zayyad] That is correct, but we hope that conditions propitious for elections in the territories will arise.

[Shilon] And you know in advance that the PLO would be the winner?

[Abu-Zayyad] Listen, as a journalist, as a man living among the people, I feel that the Palestinian people want their national identity and representative. Now, the problem is not whether the PLO is the representative; the question is whether the Palestinians are a nation with a right to self-determination and to their own state, or whether they are a lesser nation.

[Shilon] With your permission, before you touch on that issue, which you call substantive, let me ask you one more thing about the PLO: You say that the man-in-the-street would vote for the PLO—but would that not be induced by fear, or by the terror created by the PLO in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza?

[Abu-Zayyad] Listen, I think there is a difference between the PLO you mentioned and the PLO the Palestinians talk about. When a Palestinian says the PLO, he means his national identity and aspirations—his people. I think that when the Israelis, the Americans,

or Westerners say the PLO, they refer to a certain image or stereotype they have conjured up in their minds. We are prepared to have elections in the occupied territories under neutral international supervision to determine the people's wishes. Our problem is not the PLO; it is that we are a nation that desires self-determination. We want the same rights to which every other nation is entitled.

[Shilon] Still, you say that the PLO is not a problem, but it seems that the PLO might sabotage the whole move, because, as you know, the Israeli leaders—not only the Likud but also the Alignment—are not prepared to talk to the PLO. This may spell the death of the move.

[Abu-Zayyad] No. Listen, there are here Palestinians who have taken part in the contacts since Secretary Baker first started to visit the Middle East. They have demonstrated flexibility and readiness to contribute actively toward the success of the U.S. efforts.

[Shilon] Forgive me, what flexibility?

[Abu-Zayyad] For example, we originally wanted the PLO to be represented or to participate in the talks. When they said that Israel is not ready to talk to the PLO and that that may end the contacts, we agreed that the PLO would stand behind the scenes and not at the forefront. When they said that we cannot participate in a separate delegation but must instead think about a joint delegation with Jordan, the Palestinians agreed to that. Now, again, the Israelis are applying more pressure by wanting to exclude Jerusalem representatives from the delegation. If you notice carefully, we have continually encountered more demands and additional terms. Our impression is that the Israeli Government is trying to push us to the corner until we reach the point where we say no. In fact, we are very much interested in seeing this move succeed; we wholly believe that we will not be held responsible for the failure of this process. We know and recognize our goal: It is to end the Israeli occupation and implement our right to self-determination. We are prepared to be flexible in everything that is procedural. If Israel really wants peace with the Arab world and the Palestinian people, this is a historic opportunity. The Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be resolved without resolving the conflict between the Palestinian people and the Israeli people.

[Shilon] One more question before we part: Suppose the two parties, or all the parties—including the Palestinians—finally do reach the negotiating table. Will you agree to put an end to the violent struggle, namely the intifadah against Israel and innocent civilians?

[Abu-Zayyad] The moment we begin to talk politics. I believe the two sides have to take measures to prove the sincerity of their desire for peace. Israel will be able to start by taking measures inside the occupied territories; we, the Palestinians, for our part must also begin to take other steps parallel to Israel's to show the Israelis that we truly want peace. This is a two-way process; each side must take one step and then another toward the other side.

[Shilon] Thank you for coming to our studio.

[Abu-Zayyad] Thank you.

'Ashrawi on Peace Process

TA2307174391 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 22 Jul 91 pp 1, 15

[Interview with Hannan 'Ashrawi, professor at Bi'r Zayt University and member of the Palestinian delegation that met with U.S. Secretary of State Baker on 21 July, by Khalid Abu-'Akr; date and place not given]

[Text] Q: Do you think U.S. Secretary of State Baker's efforts to convene a peace conference will succeed in achieving a peace settlement?

A: It is an overly optimistic assessment to say that he will achieve anything. Let's say that from our perspective, Baker is keen on starting some kind of motion or process. But whether the process will start or not is a question of whether or not the process will be based on the right conditions, and whether or not the process is going in the right direction is a third question.

But there are certain prerequisites that have to be met if there is going to be a genuine peace process. The first is the fact that the Americans must articulate an American policy independent of Israeli constraints and preconditions.

Secondly, the Americans must be able to take a firm stand and firm measures with Israel and to not continue to give it preferential treatment, and to stop treating it as if it were above the law rather than within the confines of international legitimacy.

And third, the whole process must be based on the recognition of the national rights of the Palestinians and on the basis of principles that are to be implemented in the peace process, otherwise it might be easily delayed.

Q: Does that mean that the Palestinians will not participate in a conference that is not based on international legitimacy?

A: I did not say that. I said that these are the prerequisites for a successful conference. But as you have noticed, the PLO and the Palestinians as a whole have taken a very responsible and cooperative attitude and a very positive stance with the peace process, and they have tried their best to contribute to a successful beginning in the process, and have been very flexible on issues. But, at the same time, the Palestinians are not willing to commit national suicide for the sake of this process.

The process has to reinstate and relegitimize at the same time as it must implement or work out Palestinian national rights.

Q: Palestinians believe that American attempts to convene a conference is not taking into consideration the legitimate Palestinian national rights.

A: Well, I think that the Palestinians as a whole are skeptical about the peace process, and rightfully so because it is clear that it is based on Israeli priorities and Israeli assumptions and conditions, but at the same time the fate of the Palestinians is decided in their absence. We have to be a part of any process that seeks to determine our fate because after all the whole issue is one of self-determination. So the Palestinian voice must be heard at every step.

It is not amazing that people are skeptical, and it is perfectly legitimate to be skeptical, but you have to be in the center of the arena, and you have to present your case and fight for it. Because to me the political struggle is one part of the overall struggle of the Palestinian struggle. And therefore we have to be represented and be a part of this process on an equal basis in a way which would serve our national cause.

Q: And what about Palestinian representation?

A: In terms of representation, it is very clear that only the PLO can represent all the Palestinians everywhere and can deliver on behalf of all Palestinians. And if the PLO did not want these meetings to take place, it would not have designated us or these individuals to be part of a team to carry out these exploratory talks. So it is the PLO which has decided to take this positive attitude on behalf of the Palestinians and to contribute positively to the process.

So whether people would like to see it or turn a blind eye to it, it is very clear that only through the good intentions and actions of the PLO is the Palestinian component there.

Q: The Americans said clearly that they would like the Palestinian representation in the peace conference to be a joint delegation with the Jordanians. What do you think about this?

A: This is under consideration and it is one option. We have not closed the door to any option provided it is based on proper considerations and principles. Our preference continues to be a separate, single independent Palestinian delegation because that expresses the independent national identity of Palestinians. However, if we do get assurances and recognition or acknowledgment of the Palestinian national identity and the right to self-determination, and if the joint Jordanian delegation were formed on the basis of parity and mutual recognition of the sovereignty of each component then that would not be a problem.

The problem would be if the Palestinian identity and participation are subsumed under the Jordanian component. Now, as you know, as our Palestine National Council states, the Palestinian political program does not exclude the idea of a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation, so a joint delegation is not outside that perspective. However, if this is the choice of the PLO then it will have to be structured on a proper basis, with a total political understanding of the Palestinians and Jordan.

Q: The Syrians gave a positive answer to the Americans. Many Palestinians were surprised by this. What is your reaction?

A: It surprised many people not just in this answer but in many things. However, Syria continues to be an independent sovereign state with its own leadership and it has the right to take its own position. What is essential at this stage is coordination among all the Arab countries in order to come up with a unified Arab position, in order not to allow Israel to single out any Arab party and deal with it separately. It is very important.

I understand why many Palestinians were surprised, especially in view of the fact that the Syrian position talks about the legitimate political rights of the Palestinians and does not talk about the national rights of the Palestinians. Syria can speak for itself very openly, but at the same time it must coordinate with all other Arab countries involved, including the PLO.

I am not personally that surprised or shocked but I think that with very careful ongoing coordination it is possible that a unified Arab position will emerge. However the question is not Syria I think. Syria now has exonerated itself from the charge of being an obstacle to peace. Now it has become very clear to the rest of the world, which hopefully will see that it is Israel that is the main obstacle to peace and that it is Israel who insists on imposing preconditions and constraints on the peace process. And hopefully they will see that it is Israel that is the one which has to be held accountable for sabotaging the peace process time and time again.

Q: Palestinians believe that only American pressure can bring Israel to the peace conference. What is your view of this?

A: So long as this basic ingredient is missing, the ingredient of the United States being willing to take a firm stand with Israel and to implement more than just verbal reprimands or pressure, something that is more effective—even going to the level of sanctions, Israel is going to continue to be immovable and is going to continue with its political entrenchment and it is going to continue with its policy of creating facts in the region that are subverting the peace process as a whole, and will get away with it because it has never been held accountable. So this one basic ingredient is what is needed to ensure Israeli compliance with the will of the international community. Israel has so far defied everybody and has gotten away with it. So yes, I agree, that if there is an American political will to deal with Israel on an equal footing as any other country subject to international law and to the same standards and norms of behavior that govern the relations among all nations, then a peace process will take place. If Israel continues to be given preferential treatment then a genuine peace process cannot proceed.

Commentaries Assess Possibility of Talks

Shamir's 'Tough Stand Has Paid Off'

TA2307104691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 23 Jul 91 p 6

[Editorial: "The Reward of Firmness"]

[Text] Israel has so often been disappointed by Arab professions of peaceful intent that it may have trouble believing the good news Secretary of State James Baker brought on his quick visit to Jerusalem. But the indisputable fact is that Hafiz al-Asad has agreed to direct, unconditional negotiations with Israel. The American formula to which the Syrian president has consented stipulates that the talks will follow a brief, opening conference sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union; that the European Community and the United Nations will send silent observers to the conference; and that it will be reconvened only with the consent of all parties. The Palestinian Arabs will be represented by residents of Judaea, Samaria and Gaza, and will be part of a Jordanian delegation. Israel's main concern now is to ensure that the Palestinian participants will not constitute a PLO delegation in disguise.

The Prime Minister's numerous and vocal critics at home and abroad must now reexamine their attitude. Quite obviously Mr. Shamir's tough stand has paid off. While making many more concessions than his critics credit him with, Shamir has stubbornly and consistently refused to yield on Israel's main goals: direct, unconditional peace talks with the Arabs states, and the exclusion of the PLO from talks with the Palestinian Arabs. As former Foreign Ministry director-general David Kimche put it on Sunday, one must be tough in negotiations, while recognizing the red lines beyond which toughness may wreck the process. Had Shamir heeded his critics, who have consistently advocated Israeli participation in an international conference, it is unlikely that the Arab states, and particularly Syria, would have reversed their traditional position and agreed to direct negotiations.

Since Shamir has always considered the exclusion of the PLO a sine qua non, he will undoubtedly continue to insist that the U.S. administration adhere to its commitment to keep that terrorist organization, under any guise, out of the talks. On the other hand, he should not let the presence of a silent UN observer become an obstacle to negotiations. What Israel should ask for is American and European help in passing a UN resolution annulling the "Zionism equals racism" canard, and a Security Council affirmation of the Camp David accords. These would be appropriate first steps to restoring Israeli confidence in the world organization.

Shamir's critics must also take back their branding him as an enemy of peace, a devious leader intent on undermining his own peace plan. The obvious satisfaction and relief he displayed when learning of the Syrian reply confounds this charge, which—with the generous help of his domestic critics—has become the received wisdom throughout the world. Shamir's only sin has been to insist that the government's peace plan of May 1989, which was accepted by the U.S. administration, not be eviscerated of its original meaning. The Labor party's decision yesterday to withdraw its no-confidence motion in the Knesset may indeed signal a more sober recognition of Shamir's true intentions.

Al-Asad's motives, on the other hand, are a different matter. Not only a hopeless skeptic would be suspicious of them. Clearly, the Syrian leader has not changed his goals. He still wants Israel to withdraw from all the areas it acquired as a result of his unprovoked aggression in the Six Day War, and from the security belt in southern Lebanon; and it is doubtful that he is really willing to sign a peace treaty with Israel. But he realizes that, while the Soviet Union can continue to sell him vast quantities of sophisticated arms, it is no longer able to provide political, diplomatic and military backing in the event of another attack on Israel. Nor can the Soviets extend the material assistance he needs to keep his economy from sinking while he builds his military power. Like Saddam Husayn after the war with Iran, al-Asad hopes to achieve his goals by turning West, even if the price for Western assistance in loans and arms is direct talks with Israel.

Nor has al-Asad changed his tactics and conduct. In Syria's latest complaint to the UN, Israel is accused of war crimes and genocide in the "occupied territories," and with replacing the local populations on the Golan and in southern Lebanon with Jewish immigrants. His official press still refers to Israel as the "Zionist cancer" and the "Zionist filth." And, despite his many promises, repeated last week during Baker's visit to Damascus, to let the 4,000 Jews trapped in Syria leave the country at will, he has not released information about those arrested for trying to flee the country. Nor has he effected the release of the American, European and Israeli hostages and prisoners held by Syrian-sponsored terror groups.

Yet there is hope that direct peace talks will produce a momentum towards realism and understanding. Even the most seemingly insoluble problems can yield to patient and unhistrionic face-to-face negotiations. Once the questions about Palestinians representation are resolved, these negotiations should start without delay.

Attempts To Stall on Process Foreseen

TA2307101591 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 23 Jul 91 p 2

[Editorial: "A New Name for an Old Game"]

[Text] Baker came and went, and slowly it is becoming apparent that the "breakthrough" is just barely the beginning of the road and that the "moment of truth" will last many hours.

The new name of the game is the Palestinian representation. Issues of procedure have more or less been solved. Issues such as whether the UN representative will

be dumb from birth or just mute will no longer delay the processes. Even the proposal to convene the conference in Washington will not help much.

So, are we saying "yes?" Not so fast, and not only because ministers and deputy ministers are running along the sidelines claiming that the Syrian change of stand is merely tactical and that al-Asad's intentions must be closely examined—as if one can really see into a man's heart and mind.

Now that procedural issues have been set aside, the problem of the Palestinian representation stands tall. With the kind help of the Palestinians themselves, something can be cooked up around this issue. New and varied problems can be added to the old problems of local Palestinians or those from the diaspora, Palestinians from Jerusalem or the territories, with or without the PLO's seal of approval. After all, our sages, God bless their souls, have already stated that a man does not sit even at the dining table, never mind the peace conference table, with people he does not know.

It is true that the referee has already stated that there are only 10 days left until the end of the game, but 10 days are a long time, too. And besides.... days? According to what calendar?

In short, it is too soon to celebrate.

Al-Asad Letter Should Be Revealed

TA1807113791 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 18 Jul 91 p 2

[Editorial: "A Trumped-Up Pitfall"]

[Text] According to available information, the Americans do not intend to show the Israeli Government the letter al-Asad sent President Bush, who termed it "a breakthrough."

In a bid to justify this, they may refer to the etiquette guide, which states that "gentlemen do not read other people's mail...."

A very serious argument indeed.

On the other hand, President Bush has determined that the reply Prime Minister Shamir will give Baker when he arrives here on Sunday will be "a test of Israel's desire for peace."

If this is indeed a test, Mr. Shamir and the people of Israel have a right to know what it is about.

For example, they need to know the answers to the following questions: Does al-Asad's letter list preconditions? Have the Americans given him a promise to meet such preconditions? Is there a secret agreement between the two?

The U.S. refusal to reveal the contents of al-Asad's letter is tantamount to demanding that Israel face the test blindfolded. Or, in other words, this is a deliberate attempt to make Israel fail the test.

Substance of Syrian Letter Questioned

TA1707133391 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 Jul 91 p A18

[Commentary by Yosef Harif: "The Seed of the Confrontation"]

[Text] The U.S. Administration reacted to President al-Asad's letter to President Bush in a carefully orchestrated and enthusiastic manner. Secretary of State Baker said it was more positive than he had expected. President Bush asserted that the letter represented a breakthrough, and Brent Scowcroft took it upon himself to state that only Israel had given a negative reply to Bush.

President Bush promised Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in writing to bring the Arabs to direct negotiations, saying he was determined to bring this about because "the problems will be settled only in direct negotiations." Now that Syria is no longer posing any "conditions," as the U.S. Administration sees it, can Israel pose conditions of its own, such as refusing to include "a passive UN observer," thus thwarting the chance for peace? This would seem to be the tone reflected in the U.S. reaction, whose obvious purpose is to push Israel into a corner and render it unable to reject the U.S. proposals.

However, it is not the presence of a UN observer—who has been assigned a "silent" role, as it were—that should worry Israel. The main argument remains the substance and, in this context, it is important to learn the contents of the Syrian letter: Is Syria, or, actually, the United States, prepared to accept the Israeli terms whereby "the composition of the Palestinian part of the Jordanian delegation must be acceptable to Israel?" In other words, will Israel reserve the right to veto any delegate proposed by the Palestinians? This is the big unknown. Probably, al-Asad must have made a conscious effort not to mention this issue, and that is why the U.S. Administration set out on an international brainwashing campaign to highlight the fact that Syria does not pose any conditions. And that means that Israel has no right to pose any conditions either!

Israel obviously will not agree to the inclusion of someone like Faysal al-Husayni, who gets his orders from 'Arafat, although this is the man with which the United States is conducting its dialogue. The way Israel sees it, this is tantamount to holding a dialogue with the PLO. However, instead of being held with the U.S. ambassador in Tunis, it is being conducted by Baker in East Jerusalem and in Washington, where al-Husayni visited two weeks ago.

Former Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, one of the authors of the May 1989 Israeli peace plan, said in internal discussions at that time that he would not agree to include al-Husayni in the Palestinian delegation. Will

Yitzhaq Shamir agree to do what Yitzhaq Rabin refused? Herein lies the seed of the real confrontation between Jerusalem and Washington.

PLO Trying To Coopt Legitimacy

JN2207160091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1335 GMT 22 Jul 91

["Observation" by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] 'Arafat adviser Bassam Abu-Sharif said in a statement to news agencies in Tunis that his organization has agreed to make a concession on its demand to attend a regional peace conference. He also said his organization agrees to the nomination of a Palestinian delegation not affiliated with the PLO to represent the Palestinian people in the peace conference.

Bassam Abu-Sharif's statements clearly reflect an eye-catching trend that has accompanied Baker's current tour of our region as well as his past four tours in the past four months. This trend is manifested on the one hand in the flimsy attempts by 'Arafat's organization to pretend it is one of the parties that was presented with the U.S. peace proposals, or one of the parties that will be invited to attend the proposed peace conference. On the other hand, the PLO tries to pretend that every meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and Palestinians from the administered territories have taken place at the initiative and instruction of the organization, in an attempt to portray these meetings as an official U.S. dialogue with it.

The fact that 'Arafat and his companions as well as everyone else knows is that 'Arafat's organization has not only not been invited, but also stands no chance of being invited to the proposed peace conference. The U.S. Administration has been clinging to its decision to halt any dialogue with 'Arafat's organization for more than a year. The other known fact is that 'Arafat's organization has been recently forced to submit to the will of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is probably too early now to judge whether this submission constitutes a positive development. One would think, however, that this submission may prove to be a positive development if it eventually resulted in the trend of logic and constructive positivity becoming a priority among Palestinians, the emergence of Palestinian leaders with an honorable record who would renounce—fully and for good—the path of violence and terrorism, as well as Palestinian leaders who sincerely believe in the inevitability of fruitful coexistence and cooperation between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

Meanwhile, the secret is out that 'Arafat and his companions are in a very critical predicament, and their status is on the wane—not only in the Arab and international arena, but also and particularly among the Palestinians themselves. 'Arafat's status among Palestinians has declined to the level of open challenge and the open demand to remove him. There is also much talk about the need to enact radical reform inside the PLO that reaches into its charter and the structure of the Palestine National Council, as well as into the current PLO leaders, who are seen as despicable leaders who cling to their positions despite their failure to bring about salvation and a solution, and despite all their grave and hideous mistakes, which have produced ill omens and a series of calamities and disasters for the Palestinians in past years.

Planes Return After Hitting PFLP-GC Boat

TA2407115091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Israel Air Force [IAF] planes this afternoon attacked a terrorist boat near al-Damur in Lebanon. The boat belonged to Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. The boat was supposed to be used by Jibril's organization to carry out attacks. The craft was hit and all our planes returned safely to base.

Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the attack was designed to foil hostile terrorist activity and is in no way connected to the deployment of the Lebanese Army in southern Lebanon. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the security forces continue to locate terrorist activity in the areas under the control of the Lebanese Army, and the IDF spokesman said that the IDF will continue to strike at terrorist targets in Lebanon in order to foil any plans to attack the security zone or Israel's northern settlements.

Skepticism at Jihad POW Exchange Proposal

TA1807175691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Jul 91

[Text] A senior source in the defense establishment has stated that Israel is prepared to consider proposals for the release of Arab detainees only if it receives signs of life from its own POW's and MIA's. The source reacted with skepticism to Islamic Jihad's proposals for a prisoner exchange. According to him, Lebanese media occasionally report all sorts of odd proposals by Beirut-based organizations that, as far as we know, have nothing to do with our POW's. According to the source, the organization calling itself Islamic Jihad does not mention who the Israeli POW's in question are, and Israel has no evidence confirming its allegations that it is holding our POW's. The source said he was pleased with the release of a South Lebanese Army officer in exchange for two terrorists who had been held in al-Khiyam prison. This is reported by our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe.

Herzog Sends Independence Day Greeting to Mubarak

TA2307100191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] President Hayim Herzog says that Egypt and Israel have proved to the world and to the nations of this region that countries that had once been at war with each other can reconcile, cooperate, and coexist in peace and

fraternity. Egypt and Israel's joint march on the path of peace instills us with hope that additional countries may join in and that the region, which has suffered wars and bereavement, will move ahead to a future of hope, prosperity, and affluence. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that President Herzog's remarks are contained in a message sent to Egyptian President Mubarak on the occasion of Egypt's independence day.

Likud, Labor Favor Elections in Spring 1992

TA1707151291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Jul 91 pp A1, 4

[Report by Ilan Shehori]

[Text] Likud and Labor top echelons yesterday again expressed evaluations that there will be no way to avoid moving elections forward from November 1992 to next spring. Senior sources in both parties said that the results of the U.S. secretary of state's talks in the Arab capitals and Jerusalem will be critical as far as the current government's term is concerned and that a political confrontation with the United States will lead immediately to early elections.

Senior Likud officials yesterday said that if Baker's talks reach a dead end, there is no doubt that Prime Minister Shamir will call for early elections. They said that Shamir will use the declarations of the right-wing factions, according to which the government's surrender to U.S. pressure will make them quit the government at once.

Police Affairs Minister Roni Milo, considered one of Shamir's closest associates, said yesterday that he has no doubt that the Likud will support a motion for early elections—to be held in early spring—if the Labor Party initiates such a move. "If the Labor Party submits a motion to the Knesset to advance elections, the Likud will be willing to consider this favorably," he said.

Likud top echelons maintain that early elections will freeze the political process and U.S. pressures on Israel for at least two years, until after the U.S. presidential elections, and will prevent the Likud Central Committee from convening before elections are held.

It is believed in the Likud that elections in April, May, or June will help the party avoid the negative influence expected to come from new immigrants from the USSR. According to this version, if elections are held in November 1992, a massive immigrant abstention from voting for the ruling party could be expected due to their grave economic conditions, which might result in them voting against the Likud as a protest.

Ministers close to the prime minister claimed yesterday that if elections are held in May or June, new Likud Knesset candidates could be chosen at the party's Central Committee meeting in December 1991 or January 1992, some five months before the elections as has been the custom in previous years, and will help avoid contradicting the court ruling that all Central Committee resolutions made after 3 March 1992 will be illegal.

It was estimated yesterday in the Likud that the Herut Central Committee will convene at the end of December to elect new Knesset candidates. After that, the prime minister and Industry and Trade Minister Moshe Nisim will name six or seven Knesset candidates from the Liberal Party, thus eliminating the need to convene the Likud Central Committee as well.

Hayim Ramon, Labor Knesset faction chairman, said last night that if Shamir leads the peace process to a dead end while preventing the convention of the regional conference and the beginning of direct negotiations, the Labor Party will have to initiate early elections. "There is no doubt in my mind that the government's foiling of the U.S. peace initiative, its failure in terms of immigrant absorption and economic policy must at once put an end to the life of this no-good government.

"I am certain that during the Knesset's summer recess the issue of early elections will be advanced by the Labor Party Bureau, and that as soon as the Knesset convenes for its winter session, early elections will slated for April 1992." According to him, moving the elections forward to April 1992 is in line with the timetable of the Labor Party, which by then will have finished its conference and the primaries to elect the head of its Knesset list.

Knesset Member Mikha Harish, Labor Party secretary general, said yesterday that he would rather the Likud initiated the move for early elections and that if they slated elections for April or May, there is no doubt that the Labor Party would join the initiative.

Irregularities in Construction Funding Reported

TA1907090991 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 19 Jul 91 p 2

[Report by Ya'ir Fidel]

[Text] HADASHOT has found out that the Construction and Housing Ministry has transferred millions of shekels, earmarked for the development of new neighborhoods for immigrants, to settlements and institutions some of which are in the territories. This is one of the reasons for the 1.5 billion shekel deficit in the ministry's budget. To give but a few examples, funds were diverted to Efrat for the construction of a ritual bath, to Susya for the establishment of an educational institution, to Horashim for the building a basketball court, and to religious institutions in 'Arad [all places except for 'Arad are in the West Bank].

Other discoveries: Construction And Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon has reached an agreement with ultraorthodox bodies on the granting of far-reaching perks to construction corporations in areas not included in the Construction and Housing Ministry's plans. Moreover,

some contracts with planners were signed in contravention of regulations, and in some cases, illegalities are suspected. The contracts were signed without the knowledge and approval of the branch in the ministry in charge of hiring the services of planning offices and without reporting them to the ministry's treasury.

The Construction and Housing Ministry's reaction was: Regarding benefits to ultraorthodox bodies, "the ultraorthodox are citizens of this country the same as everyone else, and they deserve just as much." As for the diversion of money to settlements and institutions at the expense of construction for new immigrants, "the ministry has always transferred such funds, for which it has special budgets." With respect to irregularities and deviations from accepted norms, Director General Arye Bar said: "No one will tell me how to run the ministry. I set the rules around here."

Businessman Reports on Meeting With Gorbachev

TA1907155991

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 19 July, on pages 1 and 2 of its LESHABAT supplement, carries a report by David Kimche, "as told to Smadar Peri," of a meeting with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on 1 July in the Kremlin. Kimche, a former director general of the Foreign Ministry, was accompanied by Israeli businessman Sha'ul Eisenberg and the latter's aide, Linda Lyon. For his part, Gorbachev was accompanied by Arkadiy Volskiy, whom Kimche describes as the Soviet counterpart to the head of Israel Manufacturers Association and "one of Gorbachev's closest men," and an interpreter.

Kimche, who has frequently traveled to the USSR on business recently, dwells at length on his three-month effort to obtain an audience with the Soviet president. He describes Gorbachev's office and the refreshments offered at the beginning of the 55-minute session.

He reports that Gorbachev opened the meeting by saying: "'I am very glad for the opportunity to meet you, since I have heard that you, the Israelis, are very active in the Soviet Union. Mr. Eisenberg, I am particularly thrilled to meet such a distinguished businessman as yourself, a man of imagination and vision. Now I would like to hear from you about your activities in our country and your plans.'"

Eisenberg described to Gorbachev his many business activities, such as the project he initiated to grow cotton in Uzbekistan. "Gorbachev listened intently and suddenly switched the conversation to the issue of Israel: Why do you not have enough water for agriculture? Are you wasteful? Have you failed to impose water rationing, he asked?"

According to Kimche, they also talked about the Ilyushin, the passenger plane to be developed and manufactured jointly by the Soviet Union, the United States, and Israel. "Gorbachev did not conceal his pleasure. 'I have nothing but praise for the joint project. It is a wonderful enterprise, and I am happy about it. I am particularly pleased about the fact that this is a joint Soviet-U.S.-Israeli project,' he said."

Kimche goes on to say: "In the second part of the meeting Gorbachev surprised us when he spoke candidly and at length about the situation in his country and about the problems he has to tackle. As far as we are concerned, Gorbachev said, we are entering a critical period, now that we have abandoned the old (economic) system, and we are still uneasy about the new system. Gorbachev explained that the transition period daily generates new problems, not just in the economic sphere."

Kimche notes that "Gorbachev briefly switched to Israel, saying: 'I understand that it is not always easy in your country to reach a consensus on political issues. With our size and diversity, imagine how hard it is for us to reach a consensus.'

"For a moment the Soviet leader, who speaks quietly and radiates enormous power, seemed to be making a sort of personal confession: 'I am constantly receiving advice from strangers, who give me recommendations and warn me to act faster, but they do not know what they are talking about. They urge me to introduce rapid changes into our economy, but I know that they do not implement their good advice in their own countries. I try hard to maintain sound judgment and sobriety. The way I see it, we will advance toward a market economy. We are working on changing the ownership of our economic enterprises and on altering the character of our public sectors. We will do that, however, at the pace we deem best for the Soviet Union. We must act at the pace best suited to us.

"'I am told that government control over the economy should be abolished at once, but I find that in the West, too, almost everything is subject to government control. In Israel, for example, you have very close government control over all economic centers of power.... The Supreme Soviet has recently approved the privatization law. Immediately after the final results of the vote were publicized, however, kolkhoz members and workers held a demonstration outside the office of the president of the Supreme Soviet. They cautioned that the new law would work against the workers and hurt them. That is just one example of the complexities in our country. Any alteration, change, or even an attempt to make a change, immediately arouses opposition.'"

Kimche continues: "The third and last part of our meeting with Gorbachev was dedicated to the Israeli issue. I cannot elaborate on this point. I can only say that I discussed with the Soviet president the relationship between Moscow and Jerusalem, and I was glad to hear a sympathetic and positive tone from the Soviet president. Of all our politicians, the only one mentioned was Yitzhaq Shamir. Other than that, it is too early to elaborate on what was discussed in our session.

"I gathered the impression that President Gorbachev is very knowledgeable about the Israeli issue. I seem to have noticed in him a special interest in Israel, not just with regard to political issues pertaining to the Middle East and Israeli-Arab relations. For example, he wanted to know about the absorption of Soviet immigrants in Israel and whether Israel is really becoming a country where Russian culture and language have become an important component in everyday life."

Kimche notes that throughout the session "the Soviet president did not utter even one word of criticism against Israel."

Husayn, PLO, Fatah Officials View Baker Visit

JN2307160191 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Mahmud 'Abbas [Abu- Mazin], PLO Executive Comittee member, and Hakam Bal'awi, Fatah Central Committee member and ambassador of the state of Palestine in Tunis, at the Royal Hashemite Court this afternoon in the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan.

During the meeting, they discussed the progress of the peace endeavors in light of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Jordan and the region's states.

The meeting was attended by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah, adviser to his majesty the king on political affairs; and al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

Columnist Chides House Statement on Conference

JN2307152091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Jul 91 p 22

["Spotlights" column by Tahir al-'Adwan: "The House, the Government, and the Peace Conference"]

[Text] The Jordanian House of Representatives' rejection of the peace conference does not mean that Jordan will not attend it. There is no longer any official Arab rejection of the conference and Israel is apparently going to agree to it. Thus, everything is on a one-hundred-percent open American track.

The House of Representatives, just like the government, is facing crucial decisions. The situation should not be dealt with in general statements, but in specific and clear stances that put the people in the picture of the entire situation.

The Jordanian Government decided to go to the peace conference on the same day the House of Representatives decided to reject this conference. What does this mean? Does it mean that the House of Representatives, in principle, opposes peaceful solutions to the Palestine question? Or is it only a matter of clarifying the House stance on the peace conference?

I do not think that the House of Representatives statement opposes peaceful solutions in principle, because the House has just given its confidence to the government, whose statement emphasized the principle of seeking a peace conference to resolve the Palestine question on the basis of the Security Council resolutions and the tenets of international legitimacy.

The House voted confidence in the previous government on the basis of the same Jordanian foreign policy that has been advocating a peaceful solution to the Palestine question for over 20 years.

There is a contradiction that should be clarified. If the government has received a parliamentary majority agreeing to attend the peace conference, then how can the parliamentary majority agree to a decision rejecting this conference? It should be acknowledged that Jordan is ready to participate in the peace conference in accordance with James Baker's plan. Therefore, it is unreasonable for the people to face two contradictory positions, especially since the government has emerged from the House of Representatives and represents its majority.

It would have been more logical if the House statement contained the basic principles that it believes should be binding to the Jordanian position in the peace conference, instead of declaring general principles rejecting all that is being proposed.

We are facing crucial decisions that cannot be made in a session of one or two hours, and before the House has received any report on the details of James Baker's talks in Amman.

Why did the House not wait for the government's meeting? Why have democratic principles not been observed in discussing the peace conference and all proposals related to it after hearing the political reports needed to shape the picture of what is being proposed by all parties?

We need statements that contain political positions in clear political language that can be easily translated into effective positions, especially since Jordan is really going to the peace conference.

Effectiveness of Mubarak's Boycott Idea Queried

JN2307113191 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Jul 91 pp 26, 24

["Just an Opinion" column by Badr 'Abd-al-Haqq: "Revoking the Arab Boycott and Free Israeli Gains"]

[Text] There is only one case in which Israel would accept the idea of lifting the Arab economic boycott. That is if lifting the boycott is unconditional, and is a free gift to the Jewish state to prove that the Palestinians, in particular, and the Arabs in general, are neither terrorists, savages, nor murderers. Such a gift would show them to be ordinary human beings who want to lead peaceful lives and dream of security and stability.

If the peace process were to proceed according to the current course, which was determined by the United States, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's proposal to revoke the Arab boycott in return for halting settlement in the occupied territories would be met with strong Israeli anger. As a matter of fact, it was received with such anger. Furthermore, it would be said—indeed, it has already been said—that such a deal is unfair to Israel, because settlement is not an issue for bargaining. The Israeli argument would be that it is an inalienable right that should not be questioned. With regard to ending the boycott, the Israelis would argue that it must be part of the lavish Arab generosity for which the Arabs deserve nothing in return from the Israeli side.

Irrespective of all this, is there anything looming on the horizon of the peace process showing that an end to the boycott can really contribute to peace efforts or, for that matter, confer seriousness on these efforts or lend them credibility? Could Israel be waiting for Arab ideas that are more serious than the idea of ending the boycott so that it can swallow them, free of charge?

Israel is well aware that the Arab boycott had a strong, convincing, and effective start. Yet, after a few years, it ended up as a mere skeleton. It is no longer what it used to be in the past—a main and effective tool used in the historical confrontation between the Arabs and Zionists. It has turned into something resembling an attempt to register stands. The need to closely and comprehensively monitor the institutions and companies which do business with Israel has been forgotten for a very simple "typically" Arab reason; namely, the capabilities of the Arab boycott offices are limited. Besides, they have never had the required competence and expertise and finances to foil the attempts to smuggle into Arab markets commodities from hostile markets after their trade marks are replaced by Arab and friendly (but fake) trade marks. In light of the official Arab deficiency, regarding the failure to meet the true requirements of Arab boycott, it is now possible to say that Israel has the right to ridicule the boycott idea and to view the elimination of the boycott as inevitable, as Israel has, over the years, managed to smuggle large amounts of its commodities into Arab markets.

Therefore, the gift President Mubarak is offering to Israel has no effect with regard to the search for peace. However, this gift will prompt the Arabs on the popular level and (perhaps the official) level as well to wonder about the reasons which could have made the Arabs voluntarily abandon what remains of the boycott, even if the sole purpose of it was to vent anger over Israeli bullying and everything that Israel, as a main cause of concern, confusion, and wars inside and sometimes outside the Arab region stands for.

It is a typical gratuitous deal according to which Israel will unconditionally rid itself of the effects of the Arab boycott, which was expected to remain in force as a thorn in the side of Israeli intransigence and a manifestation of the Arabs' continued hostility toward the Zionist movement, and the Jewish state as well.

Arab League Chief Arrives for Regional Talks

JN2407103391 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1000 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid arrived in Amman before noon today on a two-day visit to Jordan in the framework of his current tour to a number of Arab states.

During his visit, the Arab League secretary general will meet with a number of Jordanian officials for talks on the current situation in the area and efforts under way to reach a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian problem, and the Arab League's role in pushing joint Arab action and clearing the Arab atmosphere.

He was met at the airport by Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, the foreign minister, and a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

Cabinet Supports Middle East Peace Conference

NC2307193591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] The cabinet has decided to support the efforts aimed at convening an international conference to solve the Middle East issue. It stressed, however, that agreement in principle to attend the conference in no way implies a connection between implementation of Security Council Resolution 425 and a Middle East solution. The cabinet rejected settling the Palestinians in Lebanon. It said that the solution to the problem of the Israeli occupation lies in implementing Resolution 424 and stressed its adherence to all provisions of the truce agreement. It also authorized the Army and the internal security forces to carry out raids in their areas of deployment to confiscate all heavy- and medium-caliber weapons and ammunition.

Al-Musawi on Resistance Operations, Detainees

NC2407074091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General His Eminence Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi has stated that only the achievements of the resistance will contain Israel and restrict its ambitions and designs. He noted that Israel hopes to build itself as a major regional power, and while the United States is encouraging it to pursue this aggressive policy, the Arab regimes are in a state of submission. He added that as a result, the only means for the masses to express their identity is the way chosen by the Muslim Lebanese people, which is the resistance, and the Muslim Palestinian people, which is the intifadah.

His Eminence Sayyid al-Musawi made these remarks at a news conference he held yesterday to address earlier clashes between Islamic fighters and the occupation forces in Taw'amat Niha. He added that nothing is more honorable to the peoples of the region than resistance, and for this reason, when the resistance is escalated, morale becomes higher and vice versa. He pointed out that after today our people will not accept the policy of leaving Israel no pretexts to remain in Lebanon. He said this policy will lead us to the logic which Lebanon adopted for many years in the past and which stated that Lebanon's strength lies in its weakness. He declared that such logic is responsible for all the destruction that befell Lebanon.

His eminence then answered reporters' questions. Following is a recording of part of his dialogue with them.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Is there any (?intention) to halt resistance operations?

[Al-Musawi] As far as we are concerned, we support any action that constitutes resistance against the Israeli enemy, whether it is a military, media, popular, or political confrontation. This is the first point. Second, let no one imagine that the day will come when the resistance will stop as long as there is a drop of blood in our veins. This is a matter of principle to us and is radically connected with our beliefs and with our original ideology and message. Any possibility to halt resistance is not being considered. We are a resistance force. We began as a resistance force and initially appeared to the world as a resistance force. We will remain a resistance force until the entire territory is liberated.

[Correspondent] It has been reported that some official circles asked Hizballah and other parties to halt their operations to pave the way for diplomatic action to seek implementation of Resolution 425 and secure a withdrawal from Jazzin. The reports say that high-level meetings were recently held for this purpose. We would like Your Eminence to supply us with any existing information about this issue and whether the question of freezing resistance operations was raised during these meetings.

[Al-Musawi] Certainly this request cannot possibly be made, particularly in the current circumstances. What is happening is that an erroneous policy is being pursued. The state believes in the policy of leaving Israel no pretexts. In line with this policy is the need to end armed resistance and every other form of resistance so Israel will be left no pretexts. As I have noted, this policy is a feeble policy that takes us back to the old policy which the Lebanese were so careful to pursue in the past, namely that Lebanon's strength lies in its weakness, that we must possess no weapons, and that we must behave like a gentle lamb so that Israel would take pity on us and the international community would sympathize with us.

I believe we have passed this stage. We have reached a stage where we can achieve a real victory for our nation. We drove the United States and the multinational forces from Lebanon, and we drove Israel out and inflicted on it its first defeat in the history of its conflict against other forces. It is inadmissible for anyone who has reached this stage to go back to the old logic. Occasionally we are caught in pitfalls as a result of the policy of leaving Israel no pretexts, withdrawing weapons, and similar actions, but to date we cannot say that we have been formally asked to do this. Even if there is a formal request, we have refused in advance to consider halting the jihad operations. [end recording]

On the neglect shown to the issue of kidnapped and detained people, his eminence said that these days are the days of the distinguished detainee His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd and his brother detainees in the occupation's prisons and al-Khiyam detention camp. He explained that if proper standards are adopted, these detainees become the criterion by which patriotism is measured and added that he does not expect state officials to do anything helpful in connection with the issue of the kidnapped and detained individuals.

Al-Musawi questioned how Defense Minister Michel al-Murr can definitely state that the [Lebanese] Forces are not holding detainees. He said: We do not trust these officials with any matter. He criticized al-Murr's remarks regarding the recent Islamic Resistance operation and the Israeli aggression against the resistance.

Commenting on the Defense Ministry's statement that the Army confronted enemy planes, 'Allamah al-Musawi praised the soldiers' patriotism and said they are our sons and brothers. He criticized the political leadership over its attitude on the issue and asserted that the Islamic Resistance which defeated the multinational forces will continue its operations, even if it is left alone on the battlefield.

Army Removes Barriers Around Tyre Camps

NC2407053291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Yesterday the Lebanese Army began to remove the security blockade around some Palestinian camps and residential areas in the Tyre area. Army bulldozers removed sand barriers and other obstacles from the camps' entrances in Shabriha, al-Qasimiyah, al-Burghuliyah, and Ma'shuq.

Buwayz Interviewed on U.S. Peace Efforts

PM2307155091 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Jul 91 p 2

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by Muhammad 'Allam in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] ['Allam] Do you have a definite promise from Baker that Lebanon will be invited to participate in the peace conference?

[Buwayz] Basically we did not ask for Lebanon's participation because that was asked of us in the past. Therefore I cannot say that we have a promise. Having been given the latest details and developments by Secretary Baker and having been briefed on his negotiations with a number of states, including some Arab states and Israel, we support Lebanon's participation on the basis of the U.S. proposals based on Resolution 242 while at the same time reserving our right to request full implementation of Resolution 425 independently of the other resolutions. That resolution is complete and requires no negotiations. All it requires is immediate implementation.

As far as we are concerned, Lebanon's participation in such a likely conference would stem from its interest in the Arab and Palestinian causes. First of all, Lebanon is a neighboring state to Israel and has common borders with it. Second, Lebanon is an integral part of the Arab decisionmaking process and one of the Arab League founders. It has always contributed to Arab decisions. Furthermore, it hosts a large number of Palestinians and is fundamentally concerned with the Palestinian situation. It is on that basis that Lebanon is participating in the peace conference.

Regarding the Lebanese territories occupied by Israel, Lebanon regards Resolution 425 as the sole guarantee of their restoration.

['Allam] Do you believe you will engage in direct negotiations with Israel at the peace conference?

[Buwayz] The bilateral negotiations will cover the Arab-Israeli conflict. There should be some negotiations on implementing Resolution 425. Lebanon's participation in an international conference in accordance with the U.S. proposals based on Resolutions 242 and 338 does not at all entail its forfeiting its right to implementing Resolution 425, which is a separate and integral resolution that is not negotiable and not open to discussion except on implementation. We call on the United States to implement that resolution now. We call on the United States to support the resolution's implementation.

['Allam] What will be the status of Lebanese-Israeli relations if negotiations are held separately from the formulas adopted by the peace conference?

[Buwayz] I believe it is too early to talk about future relations. We are still at the beginning of the road in a lengthy process which has recently been boosted and fundamentally enhanced through the U.S. proposals and the Arab responses to them, especially Syria's positive response.

['Allam] How do you assess the U.S. efforts to establish peace in the Middle East in light of Baker's fifth tour?

[Buwayz] These are extraordinary circumstances. For the first time since World War II there is a strong U.S. president who is not bogged down by such issues as Watergate, Irangate, repercussions of the Vietnam war, or strategic balance with the Soviet Union. The United States is now much less influenced by Israel than it was in the past. That is why we expect more U.S. pressure on Israel for it to join in a peace plan that will fulfill a large proportion of Arab rights.

I also believe that the current Arab circumstances are extraordinary. For the first time in many years, there are wise Arab leaders tackling this issue in a professional, political, and diplomatic manner without any upstaging. This is bound to enhance the chances of peace in the region, but so far we have not sensed an equal Israeli response. I believe that the ball is now in the Israeli court, and the United States, having secured the Arab world's support, must demonstrate to the Arabs its ability to make Israel join the peace process.

['Allam] Did you request any particular assistance from Secretary Baker and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to help the Lebanese Army impose legitimate authority over Lebanese territory?

[Buwayz] We asked the Egyptian foreign minister to support Lebanon and its position calling for implementing Resolution 425 and the immediate recovery of the Jazzin area. Egypt supports Lebanon's position, which distinguishes between the resolution's implementation and issues that may be discussed at the peace conference. The same applies to Baker.

['Allam] What efforts and contacts is Lebanon making to persuade the various Arab sides to contribute to the Lebanese reconstruction fund?

[Buwayz] Several parties have informed us of their willingness to contribute to the fund. A large number of European states, including France, Italy, and Germany, have expressed their willingness to help Lebanon and so have Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

I discussed this matter with Baker with a view to urging U.S. friends to contribute to the fund. We expect urgent coordination among these states to enable us to set up the fund. I hope that this will be accomplished in the next few weeks.

['Allam] What is the status of Lebanese-Palestinian relations now, in the wake of recent developments in the camps, and will you agree to Fatah's request to open an office in Beirut?

[Buwayz] The Palestinian presence in Lebanon is a "guest presence" in a "host country." Lebanon is committed to the protection of the Palestinians on Lebanese territory, and it is committed to their security, safety, and dignity. Lebanon is also committed to treating them at least in the same way as they are treated in all other Arab countries, but Lebanon has paid a high price for the military concessions that were granted to the Palestinians in the past. I say that Lebanon, by virtue of its situation, structure, and position, cannot afford such concessions, but the state is committed to respecting all their civil, human, social, and professional rights.

['Allam] Will 'Awn be released soon, and will relations with France return to normal?

[Buwayz] France has made some proposals to General 'Awn. The Lebanese Government will adopt a stance when he accepts them. I believe the problem now is between the French and Gen. 'Awn—not between France and Lebanon. France has begun making some decisions that will finally end the coolness which has recently characterized its relations with Lebanon.

['Allam] Do you still stand by your request to join the Damascus Declaration states?

[Buwayz] The Damascus Declaration is a phase of cooperation among Arab states. Lebanon is awaiting some regional developments before adopting a stance. There could be no need in the future for the Damascus Declaration or it could expand to include more states, so we would go back to the Arab League with all its facilities to unite Arab ranks and promote coordination and consultation.

Israeli Aircraft Raid al-Damur Area

NC2407105891 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1047 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] At 1310 today, Israeli enemy warplanes carried out a raid against the al-Damur area in two successive sorties. Smoke was seen rising from the area. So far the reports have not mentioned the damage caused by this raid. The enemy radio has admitted the raid, claiming that it targeted a boat belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command off the coast of al-Damur.

Defense Minister Meets With PNSF Delegation

NC2207164391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] This afternoon Defense Minister Michel al-Murr received a delegation representing the Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF] consisting of Abu-Fadi Hammad, Abu-Ibrahim, Abu-al-Hasan, and Abu Rushdi. Speaking after the meeting, Abu-Rushdi stated that the PNSF will provide every necessary facility to cooperate with the Lebanese Army in the interest of Lebanon and the Palestinian people. He said: We sensed that Minister al-Murr maintains an entirely positive attitude regarding the required solutions within the framework of the Lebanese Army's instructions to protect the Palestinian people, particularly in the south.

Birri, Lahd Comment on UNIFIL, Future of South

NC2307135991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri has called for a general strike in the south tomorrow to protest the automatic renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL]. Birri urged the UN secretary general to dispatch a special envoy to Lebanon to discuss the soonest possible implementation of Resolution 425.

Meanwhile, South Lebanese Army Commander Major General Antoine Lahd stated today that the future of the security strip is now in the hands of international parties. He added that he has not yet conducted any contacts or negotiations on this area's future. Lahd added that UNIFIL's presence in the south has become a mere matter of form, as it lacks the ability to maintain security there.

Jordan Promises Military Equipment to Army

NC2307063991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] A Lebanese military delegation has returned from Jordan after a one-week visit to Amman. Jordan told the delegation it will present a military grant to the Lebanese Army in the form of 48 M-42 tanks with ammunition and spare parts, as well as other military equipment. This grant is expected to arrive in Beirut within two weeks.

SLA Commander Lahd on Future of Security Zone

JN2307171791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1430 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Report by correspondent Shafiq Mansur in the "With the Events" program on interview with South Lebanese Army, SLA, Commander Antoine Lahd at his headquarters in Marj'uyun; date of interview not given; italicized passages recorded]

[Text] Staff Major General Antoine Lahd has stressed that the inhabitants of the security strip should not worry about the future of their region. The situation in the region, he added, is stable and better than in any other place in Lebanon. Lahd explained that media reports about anxiety among the residents of the security zone are untrue. He said the residents feel completely comfortable and are ready to accept what the future may bring.

Asked about the expectations and statements concerning Jazzin, Lahd said: *So far, all pressure comes from media. There is nothing concerning Jazzin except media talk.* Asked about current contacts on the future of the security strip, the SLA commander said: *The border security zone concerns the region and the world. I am not the only party to decide; Israel, Lebanon, and perhaps Syria have a say, and they might even get Egypt and Saudi Arabia involved. This region has a special status, and the problem can be solved only regionally and internationally.*

I asked if he is a party to decisionmaking and whether Israel consults him. He said: *To date, the status of the security zone has not been discussed. When it is discussed, we will see if we have a word or not.* I asked whether he conceives the security strip to be some day under the control of the Lebanese Government and Army, not the SLA. He answered: *I wish for all Lebanese territory to be under the authority of the Lebanese state, but this state should first prove that it is acting on its own accord and that it is not being run by outsiders. I would wholeheartedly hope that when a Lebanese state capable of making its own decisions exists, all Lebanese armies, the Syrian Army, and the Israeli Army will leave Lebanon's territory.*

I asked whether he believes there is now relative calm in the wake of the recent incidents involving Hizballah. He answered: *So far there is no calm. There is less activity by the Palestinians, who are now in their camps. Concerning the other sabotage organizations, whether Hizballah or others, the activity remained the same. Indeed, Hizballah's activity has grown a little bit since the Lebanese Army entered Iqlim al-Tuffah and the South.*

Staff Major General Lahd denied that the SLA has adopted the scorched-earth policy against the Lebanese villages north of the security border where saboteurs take off for their operation, as happened in the village of (?Majdalun). He said: *We only entered the village and searched for weapons. We burned two houses owned by saboteurs who had fled. We were not engaged in destruction or scorched-earth or anything.*

I asked Lahd about the international forces and their status in southern Lebanon. He said: *I believe that the presence of the international forces is symbolic. As a Lebanese, I accept them because the Lebanese state wanted them here. They cannot engage in military activity or prevent acts of sabotage. There is no need to change their status. They cannot carry out security tasks.*

Finally, Lahd said he reserves the right to make the final decision regarding the internationalization of Jazzin through allowing entry of international forces and withdrawing both the SLA and the Lebanese Army. He explained: *No one has made this proposal; I do not know where you got it. I do not recognize anything said about Jazzin if I am not involved, even if it comes from Israel.*

Vice President Views Response to Bush Letter

JN2207135491 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1240 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] Al-Shariqah, 22 Jul (WAKH)—Syrian Vice President Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah has stressed that the ideas contained in U.S. President George Bush's letter to President Hafiz al-Asad were thoroughly studied by the Syrian Government and leadership. In a press statement during his stopover at al-Shariqah airport at dawn today, he added that in its reply to the Bush letter, the Syrian Government was eager to harmonize Syria's firm and principled position and approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the regional and international changes and developments, and Syria's constant desire to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the UN resolutions and international legitimacy.

On another topic, Mr. Mashariqah described his country's new investment law as an important step toward the assertion of self-reliance and the principle of a diversified economy. He said this law, together with the other new economic and tax laws prepared by the Government, is aimed at creating the correct positive climate to employ the country's various resources and secure an adequate living standard for the Syrian people.

Daily on Nation's 'Political War,' Peace Moves

JN2407062091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 24 Jul 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Political War and the Outcome of the First Round," the newspaper TISHRIN said: There is a consensus that the current efforts to bring about peace in the region amount to a real political war between the Arabs and Zionism. This war, like any other war, has fierce battles and rounds in which all the political, economic, and propaganda cards are being used. These battles also have specific goals that every party is trying to realize.

TISHRIN affirmed that Syria, which occupies a key position in these efforts, wants a lasting and just peace that can ensure the Arab nation's rights and interests now and in the future. In return, the Zionist entity is exploiting the deep changes that have occurred in the world and is using the results of the Gulf war to create a certain situation in the region to achieve its aggressive, expansionist ambitions, undermine international peace efforts, and encroach on the world's desire to bring about a settlement in the region.

The newspaper added: During his first visit to Damascus, Baker carried with him Israeli ideas that came fairly close to conditions, represented by asking the Arabs to adopt confidence-building measures toward Israel. Damascus rejected these conditions and offered, in return, a balanced position that seeks peace and, at the same time, can achieve justice and ensure Arab rights. However, Syria, which has always been the pan-Arab safety valve in the Arab struggle, will continue its role and its struggle to ensure the Arab nation's legitimate rights and oppose anything that harms the Arabs' interests and causes. Meanwhile, it is waging this fierce political war to liberate the Arab land, curb the aggressive and expansionist trends, repair the collapse that has occurred in the Arab situation, and reduce the dangers threatening the Arab nation's present and future.

Al-Asad Meets ICO's al-Ghabid, Delegation

JN2307150091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1230 today Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Dr. al-Ghabid reviewed the ICO's activities and efforts to achieve reconciliation and unity on both the Arab and Islamic levels.

The president voiced Syria's concern over the unity of the Arab and Islamic worlds. Talks centered around the situation in the region and the ongoing efforts to launch a peace process whose objective is to establish a just and comprehensive peace.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received this morning Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid. The meeting was attended by Dr. Najdi al-Jazzar, head of the Organizations' Department at the Foreign Ministry, and Mr. Nabil Talib Ma'ruf, assistant secretary general for the affairs of Palestine and Jerusalem.

During the meeting, they exchanged opinions and discussed topics on the agenda of the ICO's 20th meeting of foreign ministers to be held in Istanbul on 8 August. Talks centered on the most prominent topics, which are the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestine question, arms control, and the Cyprus problem.

Belgian Foreign Minister Eyskens Arrives 23 Jul

JN2307191291 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens and his wife arrived in Damascus tonight on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

They were welcomed at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Syrian ambassador in Brussels Siba Nasir, Belgian ambassador in Damascus (Johanne) Vokaer, and his wife.

Afghanistan

Heavy Fighting Reported in Capital of Badakhshan

BK2307143691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] According to a report, fierce fighting is raging between mujahidin and the Kabul regime forces around Feyzabad, the capital of Badakhshan Province, near the Soviet border. Mujahidin captured Zebak and (Doraz), the two important towns of the province, before launching the attack on Feyzabad. Meanwhile, several UN humanitarian organizations operating in the region have withdrawn their personnel from there in view of intensified fighting. Earlier, a UN aircraft had reached the capital. But it could not return due to heavy attack on the city's main airport.

UN Badakhshan Operations Suspended

BK2407005691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1714 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Kabul, July 23 (AFP)—The United Nations suspended Tuesday all operations in areas where fighting has intensified between soldiers of the Soviet-backed Afghan Government and the resistance.

The decision to suspend humanitarian aid by several UN agencies was taken late Tuesday in a meeting which voiced fears that such operations could lead to loss of life.

"We have suspended all our operations in areas stricken by war," a top UN official said, one day after the world body ordered 14 personnel to abandon their posts in the northern province of Badakhshan where fierce fighting is continuing.

The UN official said the new decision followed a previous ruling that women expatriates should not venture outside Kabul to provincial outposts because of an assault on female medical aid workers in western Herat Province.

Some 10 UN agencies, such as UNICEF, FAO [Food and Agriculture Agency], WHO, and UNDP [UN Development Program] dropped their field assignments and recalled their officers to Kabul, saying they would not resume operations until the fighting subsided in Badakhshan and Herat.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has already suspended work in Herat and in the key northern city of Mazar-e Sharif following a series of incidents including murders, molestation and abduction of its employees.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has also frozen operations in Herat and is now working mainly from Kabul, citing adverse working conditions in the provinces.

Most of the UN agencies said their decision to halt work was "subject to review," but sources say they are unlikely to resume operations for some time.

Mujahidin Offensive in Wardak, Paktia Reported

BK2407025891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] According to reports from Afghanistan, mujahidin fired three rockets on Kabul city, killing a person and injuring five. According to another report, mujahidin captured six military posts of the Kabul regime, killing 15 soldiers and injuring several others, in yet another clash at (Char Qila) area in Maydan Shahr District of Wardak Province. The mujahidin killed about 233 government troops, including foreign mercenaries, in a clash in Paktia Province. After their defeat, the Kabul regime forces resorted to heavy shelling and bombardment in residential areas, killing and wounding several unarmed civilians.

Reportage on Syrian Delegation's Visit, Talks

Received by Vice President

LD2307184191 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpts] The vice president of the Repubic of Afghanistan, esteemed Abdorrahim Hatef, met this morning with His Excellency Zuhayr Moshariqah, vice president of Syria and deputy head of the National Progressive Front of the Syrian Arab Republic who, heading a high-ranking delegation, has arrived in Kabul for an official and friendly visit.

During the meeting, Abdorrahim Hatef, while explaining political and military developments in the country, spoke about the peace-seeking initiatives of the Republic of Afghanistan in light of the policy of national reconciliation. [passage omitted]

His Excellency Zuhayr Moshariqah praised the measures taken by the Republic of Afghanistan toward the cessation and maintenance of peace in Afghanistan, and emphasized his country's support for a political solution to the question of Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

Meets With Foreign Minister

LD2307191691 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpt] In his office today, Afghan Foreign Minister, 'Abdul Wakil, met His Excellency Zuhayr Mashariqah, Syrian vice president, who arrived in Kabul at the head of a high-ranking delegation for an official and friendly visit.

At this meeting Abdol Wakil spoke about the history of friendly relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Arab Republic of Syria as well as about ways to develop and further broaden these relations. Expressing appreciation for friendly Syria's position in defending the Afghan Government and people's righteous stance, 'Abdul Wakil explained current developments and Afghanistan's efforts to find peace and his own proposals to achieve a political solution to normalize relations with neighboring countries, international society's stance

regarding the Republic of Afghanistan, the progressive processes of dialogue and inter-Afghan talks as well as about the results of the five-point statement made by the UN Secretary General. 'Abdul Wakil presented specific proposals to His Excellency Zuhayr Mashariqah to broaden and develop reciprocal advantageous relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Arab Republic of Syria and he assessed the official and friendly visit by His Excellency as an important step to this end.

In expressing thanks for the warm welcome extended by the Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president of Syria, then expressed the Syrian Govenrment and people's support for the policy of national reconciliation and Afghanistan's peace proposals. Expressing pleasure at the new development in international society's approach and thinking in defending the policy of finding a political solution to the Afghan problem, he approved and praised the Afghan Government's process of independent defense. Expressing support for the five-point statement by the UN secretary general he gave an assurance that Syria will continue its earnest efforts and support for a political solution in the Republic of Afghanistan, and he emphasized Syria's readiness to develop and further broaden bilateral relations between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Karmal Claims Innocence on Soviet Invasion

BK2107085391 Hong Kong AFP in English 0732 GMT 21 Jul 91

[By Pratap Chakravarty]

[Text] Kabul, July 21 (AFP)—Former Afghan President Babrak Karmal says he cannot be judged alone for the bloody Afghan conflict or the Soviet invasion of the country 13 years ago which led to the civil war.

The 61-year-old Afghan leader who returned to Kabul one month ago from Moscow also said in an interview Saturday evening that his return to Afghanistan was blocked despite his attempts for the past five years to end his forced exile in the Soviet Union.

"Those Afghans in politics cannot absolve themselves from the mistakes of the past," Mr. Karmal said, referring to a collective failure of Afghan leadership to end the civil war which has left more than one million people dead since 1979, and added that it was time for peace.

Mr. Karmal, who has been charged with legitimising the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, said that now he would work for peace in the country where he said elections were the only way to change political systems and regimes and curb the lust for power.

"I come as a simple servant of my people... not for power and to have a chair in government, but to do something for my country... to help establish peace and security in Afghanistan," he said in the 2 1/2-hour interview.

Mr. Karmal, speaking in a fortress-like apartment ringed by armed secret policemen, lashed out at his detractors, saying "it was a propaganda of the past" that he alone was responsible for the 1979 Soviet intervention and the subsequent civil war.

Moscow installed Mr. Karmal as Afghanistan's president after sending thousands of troops into the country in December 1979, and during his 7-1/2 years in office, the leader ordered hundreds of measures to "Sovietise" Afghan society, prompting an exodus of intellectuals.

He resigned May 4, 1986, and his successor Najibullah, believed to be attuned to the glasnost thinking of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, took over the presidency while the hardline pro-Soviet leader was dispatched to Moscow.

"For five years I tried to return to Afghanistan, I fought to come back," Mr. Karmal said, adding that he was originally sent to the Soviet Union for one month for medical treatment but that the stay was extended for five years. He refused to say who blocked his return, adding that disclosures could "complicate" problems for "countries and peoples."

He said however that it was Mr. Najibullah who finally invited him back, leading to his June 20 return to Kabul.

Mr. Najibullah sacked Mr. Karmal's brother Mahmood Baryalai from the post of deputy premier hours after Mr. Karmal's unannounced return, but the former president said the sacking was unrelated to his arrival here.

Mr. Karmal, now greying and chain-smoking, appeared agitated while fielding questions regarding previous accusations that it was he who opened the door for Soviet troops to enter Afghanistan. He was accused of trying to change the Islamic nature of the society by injecting communism through his people's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, now the Watan (homeland) Party.

"The Soviets stayed for three more years after I quit in 1986," he said, pointedly referring to the Soviet-backed government of Mr. Najibullah.

"I was strongly against the Soviet presence here. I did not invite them here and 80 per cent of my actions were aginst the Russian advisors. Twice I tried to resign but could not as the Afghan leadership had fled the country," Mr. Karmal said heatedly.

"Already 20,000 Soviet soldiers had arrived two months before I came to power here. It was I who was behind the 1982 Geneva talks for the Soviet withdrawal," he claimed, referring to the United Nations-brokered 1987 pact which finally led to the pullout of 115,000 troops two years later.

"Tell people to have common sense and judge correctly as it is enough that one million people have died in the war," he added.

Previous coups and counter-coups involving past leaders such as Muhammad Da'ud, Nur Muhammed Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, he said, had led to the Soviet intervention.

"Those countries who have interfered in Afghanistan also have no excuses... but I do not want to expose such countries and people who are responsible for this present situation as it is unnecessary to bring out the past now.... The cold war is over," he said.

"Let all mistakes of the past be left. Karmal alone is not responsible for the Soviet friendship. I do not want to make problems for Afghanistan and others, but I have much to say if judgment comes," he said in fluent English, brushing aside interpreters.

Mr. Karmal said he had no differences with his successor, adding that he wanted to strengthen the ruling Watan Party and strive for intra-Afghan dialogue based on the platform of Islamic spirit, Afghan traditions and liberal democracy to settle the conflict.

"All are responsible for what has happened, so let us not repeat the mistakes and sue for enduring peace in my homeland," he added.

Bangladesh

Officials Open Border Talks in Comilla

BK2007131391 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Text] The border talks between Bangladesh and India begin at Comilla Saturday [20 July]. During the [word indistinct] talks, the two sides will discuss repairs and renovation of border pillars, prevention of smuggling and crime. DC [Deputy Commissioner], Comilla, and district magistrate of Tripura are leading their respective sides at the talks.

India

New Budget Estimates 77.19 Billion Rupee Deficit

BK2407124891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The union budget for 1991-92 is being presented in parliament now.

The highlights of the budget available so far: cooking gas to cost more and kerosene less; prices of petrol and aviation turbine fuel raised by 20 percent; prices of other petroleum products, excluding diesel and kersoene for nonindustrial use, up by 10 percent; sugar is to cost 85 paise more per kilogram at the ration shops; food subsidies have been increased, but sugar subsidy abolished; fertilizer prices are up, but farmers are promised increase in procurement prices.

Presenting the budget in the Lok Sabha, [Finance Minister] Dr. Manmohan Singh said the government will give up to 20 percent of its equity in select public sector undertakings.

The finance minister proposed enhanced outlays on the social services sector. Investment of 50 percent of planned sources is to be made in agriculture and the rural sector.

Dr. Manmohan Singh estimated the deficit in the budget this year to be 7,719 crore [77.19 billion] rupees. The total receipts are likely to be 105,703 crore rupees and expenditure 114,422 crore rupees.

BJP Demands 'Immediate' Election in Punjab

BK2207102191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has demanded immediate elections in Punjab and said delay in holding them is causing much damage to the strife-torn state. Talking to newsmen at Baroda airport today, he expressed concern over the increasing incidents of kidnapping in border states. He said the BJP is in favor of debarring those propagating secessionism from contesting polls, but is opposed to amending the Constitution for the purpose.

BJP Demands Handing Over Kashmir to Army

BK2307155891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has demanded the handing over the Kashmir valley to the army to liquidate terrorism. A party delegation led by Mr. K.N. Sahni, and the state BJP chief, Professor Chaman Lal Gupta, met the prime minister in New Delhi today and submitted a memorandum to this effect. It also demands early settlement of the problems of the migrants from Kashmir. The memorandum pleads for a regional council for Jammu and redistribution of assembly seats among the three regions of Jammu, Ladakh, and Kashmir.

Pawar Warns Against Attempts To Destabilize

BK2307130091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said that India will not tolerate attempts from outside to destabilize the country. Talking to newsmen in Pune today, he said during his recent visit to Siachen and Leh, he found that the morale of our Jawans [soldiers] is very high. Praising the research work done by defense scientists, he said India need not import technology, but the research work must reach the field.

Seven Killed in Police Firing; Curfew Imposed

BK2307155491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] In Gujarat, seven persons were killed in Baroda this evening when police opened fire after tear gas failed to disperse a violent mob. Police officials told our Ahmedabad correspondent that one person was killed earlier in a stabbing incident. An indefinite curfew has been imposed in Char Darwaza and M.G. Road areas of the city.

Gang Tied to Assam, Kashmir Militants Arrested

BK2407053491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] In Bihar, the West Singhbhum police have busted a gang suspected to have links with ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] militants of Assam and militants of Kashmir.

According to PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA], two persons have been arrested on a charge of supplying detonators from Badajanda Railway Station situated on (Jaibasa-Guas) section, about 140 km from Jamshedpur. The superintendent of police, Singhbhum, Mr. M. Kiru, told newsmen yesterday that an explosive factory in Keonjhar District of Orissa had been supplying detonators packed in parcels under false name through Badajanda Railway Station to Assam, Kashmir, and some parts of Bihar.

Parliament Discusses Killing of Youth

BK1907130091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Text] The killing of 10 youths in an allegedly fake encounter by the Uttar Pradesh police at Philibhit last week figured in both houses of Parliament today.

In the Lok Sabha, several Congress-I, Janata Dal, and Left party members demanded a CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] probe into the incident. The speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, suggested that an all-party team can be sent to Philibhit with the consent of the house.

In the Rajya Sabha, the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, said he has taken note of the matter and will write to the state government.

Talking to newsmen in the capital, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, said his party is sending a four-member fact finding team to Philibhit on Monday.

Punjab 'Militants' Killed; Leader Escapes Death

BK2307052091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] In Punjab, seven [as heard, tally below does not correspond] militants were killed, while a senior Shiv Sena leader escaped an attempt on his life in separate incidents since yesterday.

According to an official spokesman, a militant opened fire when the Shiv Sena leader, Mr. Rakesh Mahajan, who was traveling along with his family in a car, had stopped near the village Umra Nangal in Amritsar District. Mr. Mahajan escaped unhurt while his police bodyguard and his family members were injured. Three militants were killed in Amritsar, two in Ferozepore, and one in Faridkot District in separate encounters with security forces.

Janata Party Puts 'Full Faith' in Party Chief

BK2207095491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] The Janata Dal Political Affairs Committee [PAC] has reposed its full faith in the party president, Mr. S.R. Bommai. It has brushed aside the severe criticism against him and Mr. V.P. Singh by senior party leader Mr. Ajit Singh who had demanded Mr. Bommai's resignation. An emergency session of the PAC in New Delhi last night passed a resolution to this effect. Mr. Ajit Singh did not attend the meeting. Briefing reporters after the meeting, the Dal's [Party's] spokesman, Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy, announced the appointment of new office bearer's by Mr. Bommai. Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan has been appointed vice president. Mufti Mohammad Sayeed will be the chairman of the party parliamentary board, while Mr. Sharad Yadav will be the new secretary general. While, Mr. Purusuttam Kaushik and Mr. Gopal Pacherwal, former MPs, have been retained as general secretaries, Mr. Bommai has appointed Mrs. Parmila Dandvate, Mr. Nitesh Kumar, Mr. K.C. Teyagi and Mr. Mumtaz Ansari as general secretaries.

Mauritian Prime Minister Begins Visit

BK2407031891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0240 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] The prime minister of Mauritius, Mr. Anerood Jugnauth, arrived in New Delhi last night on a three-day official visit. He was received at the airport, among others, by the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki.

During his stay in New Delhi, the visiting dignitary will call on the president, Mr. Venkataraman; the vice president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma; and will have meetings with the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao.

Mr. Jugnauth is also scheduled to meet Mrs. Sonia Gandhi.

Successful Test of Prithvi Missile Hailed

BK2007135191 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Commentary by Ravinder Pal Singh, senior research fellow at the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis]

[Text] With the fourth successful test launch of surface-to- surface guided missile, Prithvi, India has moved yet another step closer to a successful culmination of its integrated guided missile development program. The euphoria from the success of the Prithvi program has to be seen in the context of its contributions to India's security potential, its deterrent values, and sustainability of India's policy of self-reliance in high technology projects. Secondly, one has to take note of reactions and capabilities of comparative missile potential being developed or being made available within the region, and thirdly, the limitations of such technology when involved in a race with technology itself.

The integrated guided missile development program was initiated in July 1983 as a response to the growing awareness of operational value of missile technology. Missiles by virtue of their speed, accuracy and penetrability can bring to bear lethal power against value targets. Consequently, two surface-to-air missiles—Trishul and Akash, one antitank missile—Nag, and one surface-to-surface ballistic missile—Prithvi, were planned for operational deployment in the Indian armed force.

Agni, the intermediate-range ballistic missile, was planned as a technology demonstrator. Prithvi is a surface-to-surface battlefield support missile with single-stage twin liquid fuel motor. The range-payload combination of this missile enables it to deliver 1,000-kg warhead at 150 km or a 500-kg warhead up to 250 km. The warhead has cluster bombs consisting of hundreds of small bomblets which can cause extensive damage to airfields, static installations and headquarters deep inside the enemy territory. And with its minimum range of 40 km, it can provide attractive battlefield targets. Prithvi has a short reaction time and speed of three times the speed of sound. Its accuracy, with a Circular Error of Probability—CEP—of 250 meters at 250-meter range makes it a world class missile.

The control and guidance system is driven by an on-board computer based on Intel AT-86 microprocessor. The system prevents the missile from straying. Such sophisticated systems are not only difficult to develop, but also very expensive. A Prithvi missile is estimated to cost about 17 million rupees. According to earlier reports, the full-scale annual production of such missiles was expected to start from January 1991. But it is likely to be delayed since Thursday's [4 July] test launch does not indicate to be user's test from a vehicle. The missile could be carried by a [word indistinct] truck which also serves as an erector at a launch vehicle.

Successful launching of Prithvi speaks volumes for our scientific skill and progress in defense technology. It should however be kept in mind that similar capacities are being made available in our region. Some reports indicate that Prithvi uses liquid fuel based on dimethyl-hydrazine with nitrous oxide-based oxidizer. Both these compounds are highly toxic and need extreme care in handling especially under field conditions.

Besides, the fueling time lends itself to detection, especially by satellites, a factor which got highlighted in the recent Gulf war. Secondly, conceptually, the battlefield support ballistic missile should be considered as the first generation of tactical support missile. The cruise missiles are the subsequent generation of missiles performing the role of battlefield support. Because they can be launched from aircraft as well as from submarines, it makes them less vulnerable than the vehicle-borne ballistic missiles. Besides, the latter's terminal velocities being high, it becomes difficult to mount fuel air explosive warheads on missiles like Prithvi.

The anomaly which is inherent in pursuit of technology by developing countries for military self-reliance is the difficulties in sustaining indigenous high-tech development when comparative technologies can be procured by the regional rivals from the world's arms market. But in case of ballistic missiles, there is a strong concern in the West on proliferation of such technology. Consequently, a U.S.-led Missile Technology Control Regime, MTCR, was initiated in April 1987 to coordinate the national guidelines of Western countries and Japan for preventing transfer of technologies of 500 kgs. Although China is not a member of MTCR, it had agreed to act in a responsible manner in order to control missile proliferation. The major contribution of the integrated guided missile project is the creation of vast missile research establishment which India did not possess seven years ago. Perhaps Prithvi's success will take us a step closer to our goal of indigenizing technologies of a next country [as heard].

Iran

Peace Conference 'Trap' for Arab Governments

LD2307132591 Teheran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1001 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings, dear listeners. As the fifth trip to the Middle East of the U.S. Secretary of State comes to an end, officials in Washington have expressed the hope that the Israeli regime will soon give its response to U.S. proposals. James Baker's hasty trip to the Middle East, which began in Damascus and ended in Tel Aviv, took form after Syria's positive response to the U.S. President's proposals.

Although the content of Syria's response has not been revealed, it is being said that Syria has agreed to direct

talks with Israel. The Syrian response was seen as so positive as to be described as extraordinary by the U.S. President, and the enemy Zionist regime's foreign minister said: People who deny that there has been a change in Syria's stance are blind.

In the opinion of political analysts, the aim of the United States at the current stage is the earliest possible holding of a peace conference which will also be overseen by the Soviet Union, Europe, and the United Nations. Such a meeting, which is a cover for direct talks between the parties involved, is considered to be a great diplomatic victory for the United States, and it can be described as the political interest accruing from the second Persian Gulf war.

It seems that after Syria's positive response, the most important problem in the path of holding a peace conference is the issue of Palestinian representation. Following the meeting between several Palestinian dignitaries and the U.S. Secretary of State, they said that James Baker had assured them that the people negotiating on behalf of Palestinians would only be chosen by the Palestinians themselves. Nevertheless, some political sources believe that the extent of the links between the members of the Palestinian delegation with the PLO and their place of residence continue to be unresolved, because the Zionist regime, with its claim that Qods [Jerusalem] is a part of Israel, cannot tolerate the presence of Palestinian representatives from that city at the negotiating table.

The sources also add that even if the problem of the composition of the delegation representing the Palestinians is resolved and even if they participate in the talks directly or as a part of a joint delegation with Jordan, there will be further problems: such as the fate of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights; the policy of building settlements in the occupied territories; and the possible ending of the economic embargo against Israel. These problems are inter-related and the finding of solutions will require a great deal of time.

In this milieu, some regional analysts express the view that even without achieving such solutions, the holding of a peace conference can end the state of enmity between Arab governments and the Zionist regime.

Even if some Arab governments believe that the peace conference will not achieve anything and that taking part can, therefore, not be a problem, they may have fallen into the trap that taking part in the peace conference will take away many of their winning cards and will put those governments on a path of no return.

Apart from that, taking part in a peace conference will result in Arab governments adopting policies on the basis of defending such a conference and dreaming up possible gains to be made from it. In such a situation, even if an enemy, which is no longer an enemy, makes excuses, it will win greater concessions instead of being decisively confronted by Arab governments. Is it not possible to predict that the holding of a peace conference and its consequences will lead to a growing rift between some of the participating Arab governments and the people of the region?

Visit by 'Ranking Official' to Cairo Denied

LD2307153491 Tehran IRNA in English 1505 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 23 July, IRNA—The Foreign Ministry here today refuted a report by a Saudi daily on a visit of a "ranking Iranian official" to Egypt.

The al-Dammam-based daily 'AL-YAWM' wrote on Monday that a ranking Iranian official is to leave for Cairo shortly for talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and several other Egyptian officials.

"Such reports by some Arab press are fabricated, and seek certain political goals," the Foreign Ministry announced in its statement, adding that Iran and Egypt have only interest sections in each others' capitals.

Tehran and Cairo resumed diplomatic relations by opening their interest sections last May, after some 10 years of severed ties.

Velayati, Reyshahri on Hajj Participation

NC2107161391 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1800 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Report on the pilgrimage prepared by IRIB Television's political department, including interviews with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Hajj supervisor Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Mohammadi-Reyshahri by unidentified correspondents; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Some hours before the commencement of the ceremony for the disavowal of pagans, the streets leading to Ma'abid Square were blocked by the Saudi police. In Mecca's hot weather—and at 1500—Ma'abid Square opened up its warm bosom to the Iranian pilgrims. The square thronged with the cries of aversion by the Abrahamite nation and conveyed these cries to the ears of the lying American satellites.

[Unidentified correspondent] Dr. Velayati, finally, after three years of interruption in the Hajj pilgrimage, this pilgrimage was performed in 1370 [21 March 1991-20 March 1992]. Please tell us what steps by the Islamic Republic of Iran led to this.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. After the extremely calamitous tragedy in Mecca in 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988], the Hajj pilgrimage was temporarily interrupted and relations between the two countries were severed. [passage omitted] Our talks with the Saudi Foreign Ministry lasted about three years, and from last fall until the eve of the auspicious month of Ramadan, I held five rounds of talks with Saudi Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud. In the last round of talks in the Omani capital, Muscat, we reached an agreement,

and an accord on observing the Hajj pilgrimage this year was signed between the Saudi foreign minister and myself. [end recording]

Today, three years after being away from the land of the idol-breaking Abraham, the monotheistic Iranian nation uses the weapon of its cries to attack the satanic spirit of the hegemonistic powers and it is ready to shout as loudly as it can against America in order to declare its distance from pagans and satans. [passage omitted]

From the very first days, the question of where the ceremony of the disavowal of pagans would be held this year lingered in the minds of the Iranian and foreign pilgrims. Everyone wanted an answer to this question in one way or another so that they could prepare themselves to join the raging wave of the repudiators. The first question that the foreign pilgrims asked the Iranians was: Will you mark the ceremony for the disavowal of pagans this year? Will you shout death to America once again? The answer was clear: that a Hajj pilgrimage without disavowal is not a pilgrimage. [passage omitted]

The only ambiguity that existed until Friday, 2 Dhu-al-Hijjah [14 June] this year was where the disavowal ceremony would be held. Some wanted to procrastinate and obstruct the holding of the ceremony because the Iranians wanted it to be held.

[Reyshahri] Despite the promise that the Saudi officials had given, even after my arrival in Medina the question of where this ceremony should be held was wrapped in a cloud of ambiguity. Of course, they had proposed several places before our arrival in Saudi Arabia. They proposed one more place after our arrival there. But none of these places were acceptable to us. The reason was clear. The holding of the ceremony at these places did not conform with the philosophy of the ceremony of the disavowal of pagans. I can even say that it was an insult to our nation to go to these places and to mark the ceremony there.

Of course, as far as our side was concerned, we first tried to achieve a specific outcome through talks and through contacts between my representative and the Saudi officials. But unfortunately in the meetings and contacts that took place, no tangible result was achieved.

Finally, it was about six days ago [six days before the disavowal ceremony] that I felt the pace of events was such that we possibly could not perform the disavowal of pagans' ceremony or that if we accepted the places designated to us, we would not be able—as I previously stated—to achieve the objective this ceremony pursues and that it would be an insult to us and to our nation. I felt it definitely would be better if we did not hold a ceremony at all rather than hold one in the unsuitable places designated to us.

This is why I felt it my duty to designate the suitable place, because time was running short and the officials at the Iranian mission needed to prepare themselves for the ceremony. After studying the situation, I concluded that the ceremony should be held in front of the mission of the esteemed leader.

[Velayati] One problem that remained was that on the basis of the agreement they [the Saudis] should have designated a suitable place for us in Mecca for the gathering and for the disavowal ceremony. They designated three areas. I went to all three. None of them were suitable for the disavowal ceremony as we wanted. Of course, the criterion here was set by the representative of the esteemed leader, His Excellency Hojjat ol-Eslam Reyshahri. When I went to Mecca, I spoke to him and he told me which area he had in mind. Following this, long talks were held with King Fahd, the Saudi foreign minister, and the Saudi awqaf minister. All my efforts were aimed at gaining Saudi Arabia's agreement on the area that was suitable for us and was designated by the representative of the esteemed leader.

[Reyshahri] I officially sent a letter to the Saudi officials, the gist of which was that even if they designated a place now, it would be too late for us to make any plans and that we would be marking the ceremony in front of the leader's mission. For three days the Saudi officials voiced their opposition in various ways on marking the ceremony at the place we designated. It was on the last day that I sent them a message saying that even if they designated the area in front of the House of God and even inside the House of God and told us that we could hold the ceremony there, we would not accept because we could not draw up any plans now. We told them our representative had been waiting 12 days for them to designate a suitable place acceptable to us so we could start planning, and that now we had made the necessary plans and it was impossible for us to hold the ceremony anywhere else.

[Announcer] On that Friday the supervisor of the Iranian pilgrims and the representative of the esteemed leader met with the clergymen accompanying the Iranian pilgrims' convoys and informed them that the ceremony would be held on 6 Dhu-al-Hijjah [18 June] and very possibly at Ma'abid Square. Following this news, everyone started to make preparations to mark the ceremony as auspiciously as possible. [passage omitted]

The sun on 6 Dhu-al-Hijjah which carried with it the sadness of the martyrdom of the Iranian pilgrims in 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988] rose amid anticipation in the hearts of the officials in charge of the ceremony. [passage omitted]

The area around the point where this holy ceremony was to be marked was filled with colorful banners carrying death wishes for America and Israel—two racist governments that do their best to destroy and rob the material and spiritual capitals of the Muslims. [passage omitted]

This year, even though security limitations on the presence of Muslims from other countries at this auspicious ceremony had been set, many of the supporters of Imam Khomeyni's revolution, may his soul be sanctified,

attended this great gathering and joined in unison with their Iranian brothers and sisters in the crushing slogans of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" which resounded throughout Mecca. Even though the enemies tried to place the disavowal of pagans ceremony somewhere that would not have had a suitable political impact for the Iranians and for the other supporters of the Islamic Revolution, the decision by the head of the pilgrims and the obedience and immediate presence of the Iranian pilgrims foiled their plans. This year's ceremony for the disavowal of pagans was held in an impressive fashion before the eyes of the world.

The firmness of the remarks by the representative of the esteemed leader resounded through the air and reminded everyone of our idol-breaking Imam, and put a powerful end to the evil propaganda of the pagans.

[Reyshahri] We have gathered here to declare to the world that the path of the Imam and the line of the late Imam—which is the same line of pure Islam—are being pursued powerfully by his devoted and combatant student, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i. [shouts of: "Praise be to God, to Mohammad and to his progeny!"]

We have come to declare to the world that the rumors that the Islamic Republic is distancing itself from the line of the late Imam is a calculated plot hatched by the spying organs of the superpowers and the arrogant powers, led by America, and is being propagated by their propaganda machinery. We have come to declare that the Islamic Republic continues its principled stand and has not and will [not], God willing, come to terms with anyone at any cost. [shouts of: "God is great!"] We have come to declare to the world that we are ready for any devotion and sacrifice in order to annihilate blasphemy and spread Islam throughout the world, as taught by the Holy Koran. [Koranic verse follows] In this holy place which was the main center of the Islamic revolution in the world, we express our aversion and disavowal with all our might against all the arrogant and satanic powers, led by America. [shouts of: "God is great!"] In this holy place we rule out any relations with America which, according to our esteemed leader, is the manifestation of bullying, of unjust hegemony, and of oppression of the world's weak nations. We not only rule out relations with America, but will, as pointed out by our late Imam, struggle against America until death and we will not stop until we bring it to its senses and cut its hands off from the region. We will continue until we have helped all the peace strugglers defeat it. [shouts of: "God is great!"]

Velayati, Sadruddin View Iraqi Shiites' Plight

LD2107101691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Repulic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Jul 91

[Text] In the wake of reports concerning a blockade of the Iraqi Shiites by Iraqi military forces in the southern marshes of that country, Mr. Velayati, minister of foreign affairs, has had a telephone contact with Sadruddin Aga Khan, the UN secretary general's representative for refugee affairs. They exchanged views on the situation of Iraqi Shiites in the south of that country. The representative of the UN secretary general for refugee affairs expressed grave concern for the fate of the Iraqi Shiites, saying: During inspection by the UN military team in Iraq, the Iraqi forces temporarily withdrew from the area under their siege in the marshlands. But subsequent reports indicate that after the departure of the UN team, the Iraqi Shiites in the southern marshlands have once again come under military blockade.

In view of the anxiety and deep concern of the people and officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the fate of the Muslim nation of Iraq, it was decided during the conversation that the two parties will continue their contacts and exchanges of views and that the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be informed of subsequent reports.

Larijani Comments on Growth of Islamic Movement

NC2007164691 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 13 Jul 91 p 16

["Weekly Political Newsletter" by Mohammad Javad Larijani, Foreign Ministry adviser: "Against Islam"]

[Text] 1. The political opening given to Muslims in Jordan and Algeria in the past year was an unexpected development. The question that now arises is how the governments in these countries, which support foreigners, will go on tolerating such activity. In my view, three factors were responsible for this change. First of all, the governments involved underestimated the extent and power of Islamic movements. Second, they harbored the misconception that the involvement of the Islamic movement's leaders in politics would cause the movement to change and its hallowed nature and solidarity to be abandoned. Third, they hoped that the ever spreading Islamic movement, the fountainhead of which is the Islamic Republic of Iran, could be contained as a simple localized phenomenon.

2. The passage of less than a year has shown how wrong these governments were, and the Islamic movement is more extensive now than they ever imagined. A massive section of the population who had seemingly been indifferent, or even inattentive, to religion has turned toward Islam and the revival of its practice. This is particularly true among the young people, who have come to the movement's fore. It has thus been proved that the astonishing power of Islam has deep roots in the hearts of millions of Muslims, and that the smallest improvement in the situation allowed these feelings to surface.

3. In addition, the Islamic movement's revolutionary nature and the extent to which it has been affected by the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its leadership has become ever clearer. The Muslims of the world have learned numerous lessons from the Islamic Revolution, and most of its issues have become part of the Muslims'

revolutionary "character," including the people's presence on the scene and the selection and loud proclamation of concise slogans. All this bears testimony to the exalted position the Islamic Republic of Iran enjoys in the Islamic world.

4. What is happening today in Algeria, and indeed in all Islamic lands, represents more than anything else the defeat of the idea that Islam and the Islamic movement are mere political approaches, no purer than any other. The Islamic movement is much more than a mere faction, and political activity is only one aspect of it. The Islamic movement is a school of thought in which the individual is first transformed and then society and in which government and politics are given great importance. A war against Islam is different from a war against a faction or a political party. The Islamic leaders must remember their momentous responsibility and the Islamic ummah must know that creating an Islamic government is no easy task, but something that requires selflessness and martyrdom.

Central Bank Reports Rise in Wholesale Prices

LD2307173991 Tehran IRNA in English 1609 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 23 July, IRNA—Iran's Central Bank said in a report Tuesday that wholesale prices in the Iranian month of Ordibehesht (21 April-21 May) was 430.8 that is 2.8 per cent higher than in the previous month, and 25.5 per cent higher than in the corresponding month last year.

The report released here said irrespective of obvious seasonal fluctuations the index of wholesale prices was 2.2 per cent higher than they were in Farvardin (21 March-20 April) of the Iranian calendar year 1369 (21 March 1990-20 March 1991). The Iranian calendar year starts on 21 March and ends on 20 March on the following Gregorian calendar, the current calendar year being 1370.

During Farvardin and Ordibehesht of the current calendar year the index of wholesale prices in Iran averaged an increase of about 25.8 per cent as compared to the corresponding period last year. The hgihest rise in wholesale prices during that time belonged to that of fresh fruits due to the turn of the season, tuberous vegetables, and other types of fresh vegetables as well as dried type provisions which were responsible for more than half of the rise in the said index of prices.

In the month of Ordibehesht the index of food items rose by 5.3 per cent the increase in wholesale price of fruits and green vegetables at 15 per cent having been the main staples responsible for the increase.

The price of cereals and cereal-based products rose by 1.7 per cent, that of coffee, cacao, and tea by 20.8 per cent, dairy and eggs by 3.1 per cent, ghee (animal fat) and shortenings rose by 4.7 per cent, while the wholesale price of meat and meat-based products dropped by 2.3 per cent and that of legumes by 5.7 per cent.

The wholesale price of foodstuff was up by 10.8 compared with its corresponding month in the last year. The wholesale price of the said items was up by 6.5 per cent after levelling off the seasonal fluctuations as compared to those of the previous month.

The wholesale price of manufactured products on the basis of their raw materials rose by 36.3 per cent as compared to that of the last year. The index of wholesale prices for machinery and automotive vehicles in the Iranian month of Ordibehesht rose by 5.2 per cent as compared to that of the previous month which was the result of an increase of 9.4 per cent in wholesale price of other categories of machinery.

The index of wholesale price of agricultural and animal products in that month rose by 5.8 per cent as compared to the previous month which was due to the increase in farm products of 8.6 per cent. During the said period the index of prices of animal products and fishery dropped by 1.9 per cent. The index of agricultural and animal products rose by 12.7 per cent as compared to the corresponding period in the last year, which excluding seasonal fluctuations was up by 9.4 per cent as compared to that of the previous month.

In the month of Ordibehesht the index of wholesale prices of construction materials was up by 1.6 per cent as compared to that of the previous month. The rise was due to the increase in non-metal construction materials of 7.8 per cent while at the same time the index of wholesale prices of metal based construction materials dropped by one per cent.

During the Iranian month of Ordibehesht the index of wholesale prices of construction materials was up by 17.4 per cent as compared to the corresponding month last year.

Move Toward Free Market in Poultry, Egg Supply

LD2307114291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Excerpts] On the basis of a decision made by the Economic Council, chicken and eggs are supplied freely in the market as of today. Simultaneous with the implementation of this plan, consumers will receive cash subsidies from banks for purchasing the above two items.

Vice President and Head of the Budget and Planning Organization Mr. Rowghani-Zanjani announced the above in an interview with reporters this morning. He said: From today, poultry meat will be supplied to consumers at the guaranteed price of 1,000 rials per kilo and eggs at 550 rials per kilo.

Referring to the point that payment of subsidies for essential commodities will continue until the year 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994], Mr. Rowghani-Zanjani

added: The subsidy for chicken and eggs will be paid in cash. The consumers, by handing in their coupons to the banks, can receive 520 rials as subsidy for every 700 gramme chicken coupon and 250 rials for eggs [amount not specified].

According to our correspondent's report, the spokesman for the Economic Council said: From this date, egg and poultry producing units all over the country are allowed to import as much grain, vaccine, and medicine as they require, with the cooperation of the Construction Jihad Ministry and by obtaining foreign currency at the competitive rate. In fact, such imports will not be monopolized by the government. [passage omitted]

Mr. Rowghani-Zanjani went on: The new method will make it easy to supply consumer requirements, and will also create the grounds for competition and higher production. This decision is made within the framework of the economic balance policies. Referring to the point that this plan is the first experience in abolishing coupons for rationed goods, he called on the people to submit their proposals to the secretariat of the Economic Council.

Need To Implement Resolution 598 Stressed

NC1907101591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 18 Jul 91

[Central News Unit Research Group commentary]

[Text] In the name of God. Even though Iran has accepted it, Resolution 598, which put an end to one of the greatest military conflicts since World War II, has not been fully implemented even though three years have passed since its approval. The Islamic Republic of Iran has displayed the utmost cooperation in attempting to fully implement this resolution.

It seems that with the end of the cold war and the creation of new international conditions in which hostilities should be replaced with international cooperation and assistance, the United Nations is a major pillar in ensuring security and establishing peace. Undermining the decisions of this important world organ unjustifiable, especially when the United Nations and the Security Council took unprecedented decisive actions to combat a similar aggression by Iraq, thereby considerably increasing the world's expectations from this organization.

This all came at a time when experts on international relations believed that the Iran-Iraq war and the unsuitable UN approach to it damaged the organization's international reputation. Before the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, many politicians were reluctant to support the Iranian stance in the Iran-Iraq war. The Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, however, created conditions which made the world realize the validity of Iran's stances which emphasized the need to punish the aggressor to discourage future aggression.

Each time the United Nations and other countries gain experience, it is at the cost of innumerable destruction. It seems that as far as the Islamic Republic of Iran is concerned, the least that can be done to alleviate the ills suffered by the Muslim nation of Iran throughout the eight years of holy defense against the plots and pressures of the enemies, would be to implement all parts of the resolution.

The resumption of the POW exchange, determining war reparations, the creation of a regional security structure by the regional countries without the interference of other powers—as stated in Paragraph Seven of Security Council Resolution 598—is a desirable fact and can become an important step toward the establishment of regional peace and security.

Clandestine Reports on 'Execution' of Regime Agent

NC2307171191 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 22 Jul 91

[Text] Our correspondent reports from the party committee in Kordestan's first district that the party's revolutionary sons in the Zagros forces captured the treacherous mercenary Yadollah Maleki, a resident of Shamshal district in Sanandaj, at 2100 on 11 July. After he had been interrogated and confessed to his crimes, he was executed in accordance with revolutionary justice.

In 1984, the treacherous [word indistinct] Maleki had informed the enemy about the presence of peshmergas in the village of Vishkan. He then went to the peshmergas' base and told them that the enemy had been informed of their presence and that their base was surrounded. In this way, this treacherous mercenary delivered two peshmergas to the regime's lackeys.

The enemy intended to execute the peshmergas, but they discovered the plans and tried to escape. One managed to save himself, but Heshmat Yusefi, a resident of (Hashaned) village in Yavara' district in Sanandaj, was martyred. Treacherous Yadollah was thus executed by the peshmergas in accordance with revolutionary justice. All traitors should know that one day they will meet the same fate at the people's hands.

* Appointments to Various Offices Announced

* 15 May Announcement

91AS1084A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 15 May 91 p 4

[Text] By order of Deputy President and Chief of the Plan and Budget Organization Mas'ud Rowghani, Hoseyn 'Attarian was appointed the Plan and Budget Organization's personnel and administration manager.

In several orders from Dr. Reza Malekzadeh, minister of health, treatment and medical education, Dr. Hoseyn Malek-Afzali was appointed deputy minister of population affairs, and Engineer Hasan 'Abedini was appointed technical and construction affairs adviser to the minister.

*29 May Announcement

91AS1084B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 29 May 91 p 4

[Text] By order of 'Ali Akbar Rahmani, deputy minister of the interior and chief of the National Registry Organization, Seyyed 'Ali Musavi was appointed adminstration manager and assumed his duties.

Engineer Naraqi, acting director of the Iran Communications Company, appointed Mansur Kabiri-Rahnama manager of the company's comprehensive planning affairs and planning control office, and he assumed his duties.

Dr. Reza Malekzadeh, minister of health, treatment and medical education, appointed Dr. Seyyed 'Abbas Paknezhad adviser to the minister and general manager of this ministry's public relations office.

On the recommendation of Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati and by approval of the president of the republic, Morteza Saffari was appointed the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to Hungary. He was formerly the Islamic Republic of Iran's charge d'affaires in Bucharest and chief of the second Eastern European office in our country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

*5 June Announcement

91AS1084C Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 5 June 91 p 4

[Text] By order of Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abdol-Hamid 'Abdol-Ahad, deputy director for public relations and prpaganda in the political ideology department of the Security Forces, Brigadier General Majid Ahmadi was appointed general manager of public relations and Major Qodrat' Ali Heshmatian was appointed manager of communications.

On the recommendation of Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati and by approval of the president of the republic, Hadi Soleymianpur was appointed the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to Argentina.

Soleymianpur has formerly been the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to Spain and chief of the Foreign Ministry's second America and Latin America office.

Dr. 'Isa Kalantari, minister of agriculture, appointed Engineer Gholam-Reza Hoseynifar deputy minister of agriculture for infrastructure affairs and he assumed his duties.

By order of Engineer 'Abbas Ahmad Akhundi, supervisor of the Housing Foundation of the Islamic Revolution, Engineer Seyyed Mohammad Reza-Nuqaba'i was appointed supervisor of the Semnan Housing Foundation of the Islamic Revolution and he assumed his duties.

Likewise, by order of Engineer Mohammad 'Ali Vejdani, supervisor of the Tehran Province Housing Foundation, Hoseyn Arzhangnia was appointed supervisor of the Western Region of Tehran Housing Foundation for Shahryar, Karaj, and Savojbalagh and he assumed his duties.

*19 June Appointment

91AS1084D Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 19 June 91 p 3

[Text] On the recommendation of Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati and by approval of the president of the republic, Mohammad 'Ali Mirkhani was appointed the Islamic Republic of Iran's chief consul in Berlin.

He was formerly the Foreign Ministry's general manager of administrative affairs and adviser to the foreign minister.

By order of Engineer Safa'i Farahani, acting director of the Tavanir company, Engineer Mohammad Taqi Soleymani was appointed deputy director of the Tavanir company for utilization and production.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepalese React to Proposed British Military Cuts

BK2407114591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0944 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] Kathmandu, July 24 (AFP)—Former Gurkhas reacted with anger Wednesday while the Nepal Government said it hoped for compensation following London's announcement of massive cuts in the British Army's Gurkha contingent.

Amid fears that the economy will suffer, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who is also Defence Minister, will address parliament within the next fews days on the British Government's decision to reduce by nearly 70 percent the 8,000-strong brigade of Gurkhas, the Foreign Ministry said.

British Defence Secretary Tom King said Tuesday the cuts were part of an overall reduction in the Army's manpower of around 25 percent to reflect the reduced Soviet threat.

Nepal was expecting cuts, according to the Foreign Ministry, following London's announcement in 1989 that only about 50 percent of the Gurkha force would be maintained until 1997 when Hong Kong, where most of them are based, would be handed over to China.

A senior Foreign Ministry official said Britain's decision to reduce the brigade to 2,500 men was understandable.

"In view of the changed political context in East Europe and the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact ... The British Government has decided to reduce its Army and Gurkha regiment under it," the official said.

In line with a total reduction of 40,000 troops, it was natural that the Gurkha regiment should be affected, the official said.

"We do not expect our men should have permanent seats in the British Army but we are hopeful that the British

Government will think of some kind of economic compensation to Nepal to sustain the burden of the reduction," the official added.

The British Army had 15,000 Gurkhas until the early 1970s and the number was cut to 8,000 by 1975.

Nepal receives 20 million pounds a year in salary, pension and gratuity payments and some 17 million pounds in grants for rural projects in the (?mountainous home) villages of the Gurkhas.

According to the phased reductions announced in London, two Gurkha battalions will be merged next year and the remaining cuts achieved by 1997.

Nepal's economy could suffer badly, according to former Gurkhas. Lalkaji Gurung, chairman of Nepal ex-Gurkha Servicemen's Association, said thousands of families will lose their main source of income.

A member of the National Assembly (Upper House) and a retired Gurkha who served in Malaysia, Mr. Gurung said: "This may badly affect the economy of over 4,000 Gurkha families apart from creating the problem of future employment for the younger Gurkha generation."

Mr. Gurung added: "We demand that our government negotiates with the British Government for some kind of compensation until an alternative arrangement is being made in Nepal."

The British Government's announcement was made at a time when the Gurkha's recruitment by foreign armies has come under under increasing criticism here.

The Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) has called on the government to annul the 1947 tripartite treaty on recruitment of the Gurkhas signed by India, Britain and Nepal.

Party member and journalist Hiranya Lal Shrestha said: "The recruitment of Nepalese youths in the British and Indian armies is not compatible with our declared non-aligned foreign policy."

"For the sake of maintanance of Nepal's strict non-aligned foreign policy and its democratic image in the world, 20 million pounds annual income is not so very important."

Riot Police Take Over Kathmandu Post Office

BK2007003891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1839 GMT 19 Jul 91

[Text] Kathmandu, July 19 (AFP)—Riot police, flushing out civil servants on strike for more than a week, took charge Friday of the general post office, witnesses said.

Employees were denied entry to the building throughout the day.

Chief Post Master N.K. Katual had been kept inside the building earlier in the week by striking employees.

Meanwhile, other civil servants in Nepal staged a "solidarity chain" by holding hands and displyaing posters protesting their treatment by the government. Sources said the government was considering tougher action against its employees if their agitation did not end by Sunday. They are demanding higher salaries and improved health and other benefits.

Pakistan

Official Clarifies General's Statement on Threat

BK2407131591 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 24 Jul 91

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has clarified that there has been no threatening or abnormal troop movement on the Indian side of the border recently. At a weekly news briefing in Islamabad today, the spokesman said Pakistan's defense authorities are keeping a careful watch on all developments on borders with India. The directorates general-military operations, of the two countries are in normal contact with each other, and Pakistan has been assured that there is no cause of alarm.

He said the statement of the chief of the army staff, as reported in some sections of the press, was not directed at the immediate situation pertaining to Indo-Pak borders. He said General Mirza Aslam Beg, while addressing the troops, referred to the problems which were being faced by India and which could lead to a certain course of action on the part of India. He did not say that an Indian attack was imminent.

Grenades Thrown During Shiite March

BK2307163091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1628 GMT 23 Jul 91

[Text] Jhang, Pakistan, July 23 (AFP)—A policeman was shot dead and several others injured in grenade attacks as the minority Shi'ite sect in Pakistan observed its most sacred day Tuesday, police said.

Shi'ites, who form about 20 percent in this 110-million strong Sunni-dominated country, marched Tuesday under heavy military and police protection to observe ashura, which commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, the grandson of the prophet Mohammed.

The sources said unidentified people opened fire in Garh Maharaja, about 30 kilometers (19 miles) southwest of here, after police refused to allow Shi'ite marchers to change the route of their religious procession.

One policeman died while seven people, including two constables suffered bullet wounds, they said, adding that the gunmen targetted policemen barricading the area.

The small town in the populous Punjab province has now been handed over to the army, police said.

Troops were also called out in the town of Muzaffargarh where trouble erupted after a hand grenade was hurled at a Shi'ite procession, they said.

In the ensuing panic, some marchers ransacked several shops in the town. Riot police charged with batons and later fired teargas cannisters to disperse rival sects who fought each other with bricks and stones.

At least seven people were injured, residents reported.

The attack followed Sunday's seizure of three grenades and the arrest of two people, who police said were planning to attack a Shi'ite procession.

Another grenade was dropped from a balcony in the city of Multan injuring four people, two of them seriously, Shi'ite sources said.

Eleven more people were injured in a petrol bomb attack in the nearby city of Rahim Yar Khan.

In Jhang itself, the death toll has gone up to eight in sectarian clashes in the past four days.

U.S. Asked To Be 'Consistent' on Nuclear Issue

BK2307103591 Karachi DAWN in English 16 Jul 91 p 11

[Editorial: "Gunning For Iraq Again"]

[Text] There seems no early end in sight to Iraq's troubles. Still suspected of possessing some nuclear facilities, it is under pressure from the permanent members of UN Security Council—mainly the United States—to make a full disclosure of what it has. And it has till July 25 to submit a comprehensive list of its nuclear facilities or face "serious consequences". Iraq's ambassador to the UN who was given this ultimatum says his government has already given the details in a list handed over to the UN a few days ago. But the US says the list is incomplete. Baghdad's predicament is there for all to see. It has urged the UN to stop the US from taking any action.

America has not specified what it will do in case Iraq does not comply with the UN demand. But diplomatic sources have hinted at air strikes against "strategic locations" as one possibility. To further build up the pressure on Iraq, President Bush has approved a list of 20 Iraqi "command-and-control" targets that could be attacked to soften Iraqi intransigence on the nuclear issue. At the back of all this is the US suspicion that Iraq has violated the UN resolution ordering Baghdad to provide details of the nuclear materials in its possession so that they could be taken away and destroyed.

While the US or UN concern in the matter is understandable there are one or two points that need to be kept in mind. Enough force has been used against Iraq. This matter must be resolved peacefully. We know how the meaning of the UN resolutions passed during the Gulf crisis was extended and made a basis for not just liberating Kuwait as the UN resolutions stipulated but also used as a pretext to take the war to Iraqi territory and destroy Iraq's military potential. US strategic purposes may have been served as a result but much human suffering also ensued. There is a need to avoid that pattern being repeated. All peaceful means available should be used to help bring an end to this crisis. And sabre-rattling, to which the US seems especially prone after the quick-fix victory in the Gulf war, should be eschewed.

The other point relates to the larger question of nuclear capability in the hands of the Third World. This is a point to which we have often returned in these columns. But it is still something which never ceases to amaze. There is little logic in the American obsession about nuclear weapons getting into the hands of what it likes to think are "irresponsible" countries. Hence its opposition against Pakistan's nuclear programme. Hence also its concern about some residual nuclear materials remaining in Iraq hands (that is, if Iraq had any to begin with).

But America's concern goes dead when it comes to Israel. It is no secret that Israel possesses quite a few nuclear bombs. Yet the Israeli nuclear capability is an off limits area for the champions of non-proliferation. This also applies to India which has a known nuclear capability but which the United States seems to have accepted as a fait accompli. The American position regarding Third World nuclear capability would not suffer if it was more consistent and less selective and discriminatory. But the way things are, it only seems that the aim behind American nuclear policy abroad is not just non-proliferation but the preservation of an inquitious status quo.

Ministerial Commission Meeting With Sudan Opens

BK2007155191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Jul 91

[Text] The Pakistan-Sudan Joint Ministerial Commission opened its two-day session in Islamabad today. Inaugurating the meeting, Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz said the session will provide a regular forum for an in-depth review of bilateral relations and help identify new areas of cooperation.

Dr. 'Awad Ahmad Rijaz, the Sudanese minister for commerce and supplies, who is leading his country's delegation, said Sudan desires to seek Pakistan's cooperation and assistance in various fields. At the commission's meeting, working groups were set up for trade, industrial cooperation, agriculture, and other fields, and these groups will offer practical suggestions. The two countries also signed an agreement for the establishment of a joint ministerial commission.

The Sudanese minister met the finance minister and discussed with him matters relating to the promotion of bilateral economic cooperation. Sudan's president, General 'Umar Hasan Ahmed al- Bashir, has said his country desires to further increase economic cooperation and trade relations with Pakistan. He stated this in a message which Dr. 'Awad Rijaz, the Sudanese minister of commerce and supplies, conveyed to President Ghulam

Ishaq Khan in Islamabad today. The president also expressed similar sentiments and said the cornerstone of Pakistan's policy is to have close cooperation with the Islamic world in all fields. The Sudanese minister apprised the president of the talks he held with Pakistani officials on ways and means to promote bilateral economic cooperation in various fields, especially agriculture and related sectors. During the meeting, discussions were also held on the ongoing process of the Islamization of the economies in Pakistan and Sudan.

Sharif Bid for More Powers Resisted

BK1707005491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1707 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Islamabad, July 16 (AFP)—Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's bid for extraordinary powers to curb crime in Pakistan is meeting strong resistance, not only from the opposition but also from members of his own party, observers said Tuesday.

Some prominent ruling Islamic Democratic Alliance (IJI) members of parliament openly criticised the intended measures while the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of former Premier Benazir Bhutto has threatened to take the issue to the streets.

Contrary to official assertions Monday that a constitutional amendment aimed at giving the government additional powers to punish criminals quickly had been finalised, it was still not moved in parliament.

Observers, noting the delay, said the plan had obviously run into "serious difficulties."

No official has disclosed the contents, but newspaper reports have said the legislation would enable the government to take whatever measures it considers necessary in a crime-affected zone, while barring courts from intervening.

"The government is seeking to foist a fascist measure," proclaimed Farooq Leghari, a PPP leader who is also acting as parliamentary opposition leader while Ms. Bhutto is abroad.

Calling the planned amendment a "black law," he said it would lead to usurpation of the fundamental rights of citizens and more "victimization" of political opponents.

"The government will have to physically throw us out of the parliament to have it passed," he said, adding that the opposition would hold protest rallies outside.

More than 40 MPs from the opposition People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) of which the PPP is the core party attended Tuesday's session of the National Assembly wearing black arm bands.

Mr. Leghari, addressing a news conference at the parliament, virtually spurned the government plea seeking the opposition's cooperation in unanimously passing the proposed legislation.

He asked Mr. Sharif to "roll back" what he called an anti- opposition campaign, and to release political prisoners, make suitable changes in the administration in sindh province, and withdraw actions against detained former Kashmir Premier Mumtaz Hussain Rathore.

Mr. Sharif's adviser on information, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, told reporters that IJI parliamentarians were continuing their "discussion in depth" to develop a consensus on the proposed amendment.

The statement implicitly acknowledged the difficulties, as newspapers carried a series of strongly critical statements by a number of IJI figures.

Mr. Ahmed said Mr. Sharif had said "the government wants to take the opposition into confidence."

He also quoted him as saying the amendment would not be used against any person or group and the sole aim was to curb terrorists, bandits and criminals "playing with the lives and property of innocent citizens."

"The people have lost faith in the existing laws and the criminals are getting undue advantage out of these laws," Mr. Sharif said at an IJI meeting.

"The amendment," he said, "is a serious matter and the government is not in a hurry as some people believe," adding that it was not his intention to "snatch anybody's rights."

Opponents of the move in the IJI camp include Senator Pir Mardan Shah Pagara, an influential spiritual leader, Zahid Sarfraz, a member of the national assembly and a former minister, and Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, a former caretaker prime minister.

Iranian Commander Speaks on Kashmir Issue

BK1707071491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Jul 91

[Text] Major General Mohsen Reza'i, chief commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, has said that Kashmir is a part of the Islamic world and Iran wants its peaceful solution like Pakistan. He said this while addressing a press conference in Karachi yesterday. Earlier, at another engagement, Major General Reza'i expressed deep concern over the presence of Israeli commandos in occupied Kashmir.

Sri Lanka

LTTE 'Stalemate' Shows Need for Negotiations

BK2407024091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0239 GMT 24 Jul 91

[By Anosh Ahamath]

[Text] Colombo, July 24 (AFP)—As the battle for control of an army camp grinds into its third week, the need has once

again been highlighted for a political solution to Sri Lanka's longstanding ethnic conflict, analysts here say.

The current stalemate in the struggle over the northern Elephant Pass army camp after two weeks of fierce fighting actually symbolises the no-win reality of an ethnic war which has killed thousands since 1983, the analysts say.

"By now both sides should have done some serious soul searching," one analyst commented. "The military stalemate must be seen in its correct perspective—it reflects the no-win game in the ethnic war."

He said the resistance put up by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas in the face of a massive air, sea, and land offensive over the past fortnight has enabled critics to spot damaging chinks in the government's armour.

"More than anything, the deadlock (at Elephant Pass) shows the LTTE can continue to surprise by withstanding large military offensives for a long time despite receiving a battering," another analyst said.

"But the Tigers also must realise that this war is costly for them in terms of human lives. The realisation should dawn on them that it is time for talks," he added.

According to official statistics, some 80 soldiers and 892 LTTE guerrillas have been killed since July 10, when the LTTE made a massive bid to overrun the Elephant Pass camp.

Colombo has placed the entire north of Sri Lanka under an indefinite curfew and sent troop reinforcements by sea in an attempt to lift the blockade, but hundreds of militants met the army advance with stiff resistance.

For its part, the LTTE has so far not commented on the situation at Elephant Pass.

The Elephant Pass battle is being seen here as another bid by both sides to save their image, at a time when the government has been coming in for heavy press criticism for its handling of the military campaign.

"If the army loses the camp, it will become a strategic loss and will be a blow to their prestige and morale. The Tigers are trying to hold sway over important areas in the north by capturing the camp," a military analyst said.

The Elephant Pass camp is the only remaining military base located on a 142-kilometer (85-mile) stretch of highway linking the northern town of Vavuniya to the LTTE stronghold of Jaffna.

During the past year, the guerrillas have either overrun or forced the closure of several other army camps that flanked the Vavuniya-Jaffna road. They currently control large areas in four of Sri Lanka's northern districts.

With escalating defence expenditures eating into the economy, the government is only too well aware of the urgent need for a political solution, though it would like to negotiate from a position of strength.

At a meeting of Buddhist clergy last weekend, President Ranasinghe Premadasa renewed his appeal to the LTTE to contest elections and prove its claim as the sole representative of Sri Lanka's two million minority Tamils.

"We are prepared to give them the chance to clinch their claim with a mandate from the people. This will enable other Tamil groups and parties to stake their claim. Let the people give their verdict," the president said.

But the LTTE, which is fighting to establish an independent Tamil nation, has rejected conditions laid down by the government for the resumption of talks between the two sides.

The LTTE previously began 14 months of peace talks with the government during the presence of Indian troops sent to contain Tamil militancy in the island's northeast under a July 1987 bilateral accord.

Observers at the time said the LTTE accepted the offer under pressure from the Indian Army offensive in the northeast, where the majority of Sri Lanka's two million Tamils live.

The Indian troops withdrew in 1990 after a bloody bush war with the Tigers in which some 1,200 Indian soldiers and thousands of rebels and civilians were killed.

Peace negotiations between Colombo and the LTTE collapsed in June 1990, leading to renewed fighting between the two sides. Since then, the fighting has left more than 8,750 people dead.